Deliverable 2.2
Engagement Strategy

Version 1

WP 2
Deliverable 2.2
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Contents

1. Objective of the Engagement Strategy

TechOceanS will ensure robust communication of TechOceanS's results by engaging key stakeholders through a range of strategic activities to translate research results. This strategy draws on the expertise of the whole partnership, particularly TechOceanS's Theme 5 leaders as well as the industrial partners and those that work with regulatory bodies, who will provide valuable insights into the perception and communication channels of key target users.

Stakeholder identification is a key aspect of stakeholder engagement. Partners will have a crucial role in initially populating the stakeholder database with relevant contacts, respecting GDPR considerations, especially of those from within the industrial, regulatory and policy sectors. Additional contacts will be added as the project progresses and networks are established. Communication and engagement will be a continuous process throughout the project and beyond.

TechOceanS will develop several different communication and dissemination resources and materials to enable the promotion of project results and to encourage the uptake and exploitation of its optimised solutions. On-going engagement with stakeholders as the project progresses will be critical to ensure that the project outcomes are effectively and efficiently transferred to the relevant applications by regulatory, policy and industrial users.

TechOceanS partners will strengthen established links with international research institutes (e.g. JAMSTEC, University of Tokyo, Japan and Dalhousie, Canada) and international user and stakeholder groups (e.g. East West University, Bangladesh, Small Island Developing States) as well as engage with international organisations such as GOOS, JCOMM, the GlobalHAB programme and concurrent and linked H2020 projects such as Blue-Cloud, EuroSea and SeaDataCloud.

Stakeholders will be embedded within our Advisory Board and through existing links with previous projects that have shaped the proposed research. In addition, stakeholder interactions will be key in the setup (WP2), Best Practice Development (WP6), Knowledge and Data management (WP7) and exploitation/impact (WP12) stages of our communication, dissemination and exploitation strategies.

Stakeholders will also provide important input into the TechOceanS engineering process, where technologies must pass certain gateway reviews before being approved for advancement down the technology readiness level (TRL) chain. The full engineering process is shown in the image below and, while stakeholder feedback is welcome across all stages, it will be of particular importance in determining decision gateways 2, 7 and 8 where the following questions are asked:

- Gateway 2: Is the proposed solution viable and will it address an end user need?

- Gateway 7: Is the technology of a high enough standard for validation testing/deployment?

- Gateway 8: Has the technology been demonstrated to satisfy the next TRL?

In this way, stakeholder engagement will be crucial not only for outreach beyond the project, but also for ensuring that TechOceanS technologies are being designed in line with stakeholder needs and expectations.
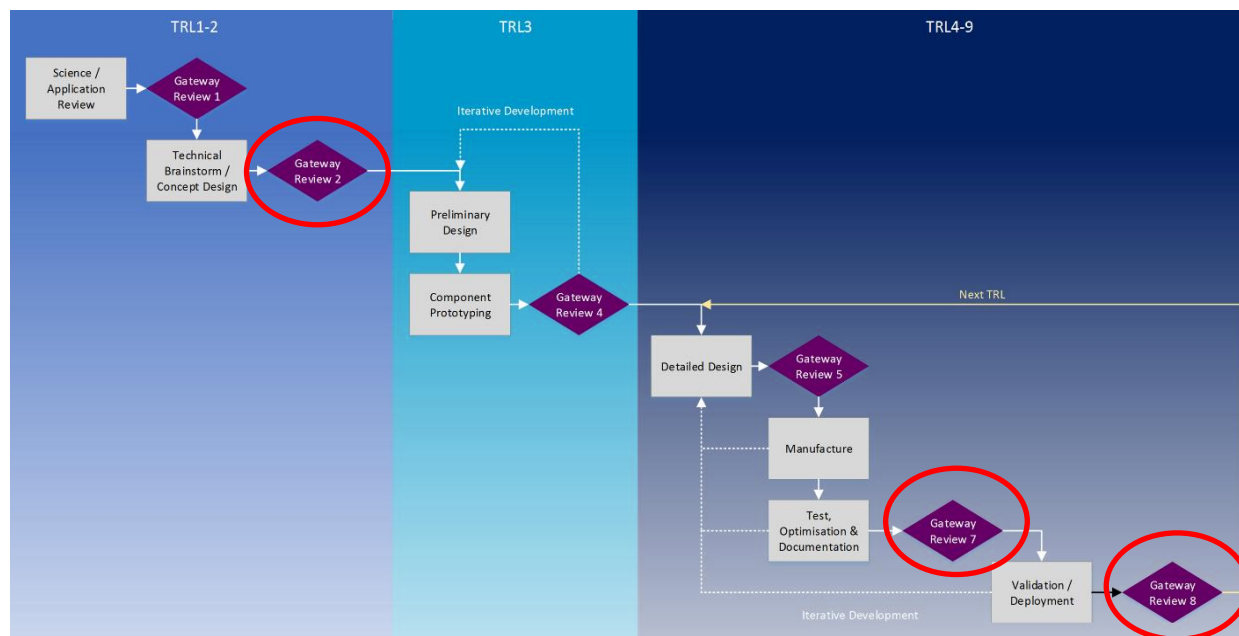

Figure 1: TechOceanS engineering process diagram with key gates for stakeholder input circled

The purpose of the engagement activities described as part of this strategy below are to facilitate dialogue, build relationships and generate exchanges between TechOceanS and relevant industry, policy, science and societal stakeholders. Therefore, in order to design impactful activities, this strategy also provides an overview of the TechOceanS key stakeholder groups and outlines the strategy for identifying specific stakeholders within these groups.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

2.1. Stakeholder Interaction

Table 1: Interaction with each stakeholder group

Stakeholders	Tools of Engagement	Impact of Engagement
Regulators	• Regular direct interaction with partner contacts within key regulatory bodies • Joint trials/collaborations	• Demonstrate uptake of the project outputs for regulators at both the European and International level, contribution to the co-creation of new or updated regulations
Industry	• Targeted knowledge transfer activities, based on outcomes of the Knowledge Management process	• Understand the market needs particularly within target markets: technology developers and

	• Outreach and interaction with industry and other private sector stakeholders through hosted or attended events • Development of informed business plans in conjunction with industry partners • Organised training workshops to showcase TechOceanS technology	suppliers, and service providers in identified applications (Aquaculture and Fisheries, Offshore Industry, GOOS) and wider markets (e.g. in the bioeconomy, terrestrial water industry and health protection).
Scientific Community	• Interactive presentations at scientific conferences, particularly those attended by concurrent projects • Peer reviews by appropriate scientific communities will ensure quality standards • Organisation of training workshops will be held to showcase TechOceanS results and cover modules on technology through to commercialisation • Transparent development of best practices in the Ocean Best Practice System	• Build upon the existing Knowledge Base • Develop best practices for application across the relevant research fields • Collaborate with concurrent research being carried out both within Europe and globally; fostering a two-way exchange to advance the state of the art and ensure outputs are interoperable with other emerging technologies
Early Career Researchers	• Knowledge Exchange placements with industry bodies, stakeholders and other partner institutions	• Contributing to the education of young scientists • Fostering an interest in the relevant fields within the emerging researchers and technologists of tomorrow
Linked Projects	• Key engagement tools will include direct contact, invites to participate in project meetings and training events as well as external workshops, conferences and meetings of shared interest. • Knowledge exchange and collaborative opportunities, e.g. using planned fieldwork as an opportunity for testing and sharing science. • TechOceanS "research highlights" publication	• To develop common coordination and dissemination activities • Amplification of societal impact through the coordination of project events and collaborative testing
International stakeholders	• Prior relationships will be strengthened, and new ones forged through direct contact, invites to participate in project meetings and training events • Knowledge exchange and collaborative opportunities, e.g. using planned fieldwork as an opportunity for testing	• To share technological advancements and align research programmes • To allow as much as possible for the application of project outputs in EOVs where they are most needed

	and sharing science.	
Policy Makers	• Regular direct interaction with key policy makers at the national, supra-national, and international levels • Organisation of a policy panel meeting • Publication of a science-policy brief	• Provide decision makers with feedback, ideas and opportunities for improved research, innovation and technology policy • Demonstrate the importance and application of project concepts for facilitating a future Blue Economy
General Public and all Stakeholders	• Project Website • Project Factsheet • Press Releases • Annual Newsletters • Social Media	• Share and showcase project information, news, upcoming activities and events to demonstrate the benefit and value of work being carried out and achieved

2.2. Stakeholder Identification and Database

Drawing on the expertise and networks of the whole consortium, from research organisations to SMEs to beneficiaries and stakeholders, the most effective engagement tools for each target audiences will be employed. In this way, the stakeholder engagement strategy ensures that the project expertise is promoted across all partners, particularly in industry. Partners can provide valuable insights into the perception and communication challenges of key target and users.

An initial database of stakeholders within partners' networks will be located on the project SharePoint and will serve as a means of building on the pre-existing networks of the consortium. This database will allow partners to list individuals with whom they will be responsible for engaging and communicating. In compliance with privacy regulations, the database will not include specific contact details. Individual stakeholders will continue to be identified on an ongoing basis through this stakeholder database which will be developed and maintained by AquaTT and Intrigo as part of Theme 5 (Task 2.3).

In addition to the stakeholder database on the project SharePoint, there will be a separate project mailing list for the purpose of sharing news from the project. As part of Task 2.3, AquaTT and Intrigo will establish this project mailing list, to which stakeholders can sign up directly through the project website. The mailing list will be managed with the online platform, Mailchimp. Details of subscribers for the project mailing list will be stored on Mailchimp in line with the privacy statement outlined on the TechOceanS website. AquaTT will be responsible for managing the data in the project mailing list.

The project mailing list will only include contact information of people who have indicated that they would like to receive project updates. AquaTT and Intrigo will work with project partners to share the link for subscribing to the project mailing list with relevant stakeholders (listed in the stakeholder database hosted on SharePoint database).

Partners will have a crucial role in populating the stakeholder database with information on relevant contacts, especially from within the industry, regulatory and policy sectors. Contacts will continue to be added to both the stakeholder database and the project mailing list as the project progresses and networks are established. By leveraging pre-existing stakeholder networks and joining this with an active and engaged outreach strategy, TechOceanS will achieve an in-depth evaluation of the reach of communication activities and stakeholder engagement, while remaining compliant with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and will facilitate international as well as national and regional stakeholder engagement to maximise international collaboration.

The key relevant stakeholder sectors for this project are **aquaculture and fisheries, offshore industries, the regulatory sector** and the **sensors industry**. Other relevant stakeholders for the project include: the **biological and ocean observing communities**, including those from **Official Development Assistance (ODA)** countries. The wider public are also considered important stakeholders, as greater interest and awareness in ocean health may translate into calls for more ocean-friendly products and support for environmentally-beneficial policies.

2.3. Data Protection & GDPR Considerations

All databases and data used will be in agreement to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 regulation, the latest EU law on data protection and privacy for all individuals within the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA). As previously described, both the stakeholder database and project mailing list will be populated in line with GDPR guidance and all data will be stored in a secure and compliant manner.

3. Engagement Tools Portfolio

The TechOceanS portfolio of communication tools and channels includes a range of tools and materials to facilitate engagement with key stakeholders and promote the project objectives, activities and results. The following tools either have already or will be designed and implemented by the consortium and coordinated and monitored by WP2, WP7 and WP12:

3.1. TechOceanS Logo

Developing and promoting a recognisable TechOceanS brand is a key strategic focus of this portfolio. Effective visual brand identity is achieved by the consistent use of message content and visual elements to create a distinctive, attractive and relatable association with the project. The project logo is an integral part of the brand as it is included in all project promotional material. The TechOceanS logo is constructed using a combination of rounded bold lettering, harmonious and representative colour choices and stylised uppercase letters signifying key aspects of the project such as biological sensors, coverage of a range of ocean depths, imagery and genomics. The "T" is designed to imitate a T-cell, the "O" a camera/sensor and the "S" is shaped to represent a strand of e-DNA. The letter colourings are inspired by the range of depths of the marine environment at which the project will operate, demonstrating the commitment to covering several essential ocean variables.

The TechOceanS project logo is available in two different versions, full colour, and mono colour (black and white). The full project name is contained within the logo. The suite of logos is available on the TechOceanS Branding folder on SharePoint and can be requested from WP2 leader AquaTT (keegan@aquatt.ie). Guidance on how to properly utilise the TechOceanS logo can be found in the Brand Guidelines, which are within the same folder.

Figure 2: TechOceanS project logo (in full colour and black/white)

3.2. Project factsheet

A promotional factsheet presenting the TechOceanS objectives and expected results will be designed and made available to be distributed at relevant events, both virtual and in-person. The factsheet will be used to raise awareness of the project and its goals. Partners will be encouraged to distribute the factsheet through their networks and at relevant events to promote the project.

The factsheet will be available by month 6 (March 2021) for external stakeholders and interested parties to download from the TechOceanS website (www.techoceans.eu). Partners can also download the full factsheet from the TechOceanS WP2 folder on SharePoint or request it from WP2 leader AquaTT (keegan@aquatt.ie).

If partners wish to have the factsheet available in another language, they should contact WP2 leader AquaTT (keegan@aquatt.ie) and follow the protocol outlined in the TechOceanS Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (D2.4 PEDR).

3.3. Website

The project website, (www.techoceans.eu) is a key tool for promoting the project and disseminating the project's objectives, work plan and results to a wide audience, including all stakeholders and possible end-users. The TechOceanS website has been developed following the EU's best practice guidelines for project websites.[1] The website is fully compliant with the General Data Projection Regulation (EU 2016/679, GDPR) by incorporating a privacy statement and cookie bar informing website visitors about what TechOceanS does with any personal data gathered. Google Analytics is used to track traffic and monitor the use of the website.

To ensure successful promotion of the project and to sustain the interest of the target audience and attract new users, the website's content will be maintained, continuously updated and populated with new information through the project's lifetime. The website will remain active for five years after the end of the project, serving as a valuable public resource of research information on the subject and promoting the outputs of this publicly funded research.

The website has multiple roles as:

- A communication resource to **promote the project**, its objectives, the consortium partnership, funding, project activities and results in research, industry, policy and public arenas;

- A communication resource to **showcase project themes and technologies**, including key outcomes and major achievements and keep update interested parties on project progress;

- A **news portal** and communication resource for project news, notices, press releases, events, media resources and updates from TechOceanS and associated projects; and

- A **platform** and **repository** for public deliverables and outputs (data, reports and publications).

Website address: www.techoceans.eu

The website structure follows an easy to use and intuitive pathway that allows the user to explore the website easily. On the homepage, the top menu bar contains buttons leading to all the sections of the website 'Home', 'Project Overview', 'Our Work', 'Technologies', 'Team', 'Results', 'Resources' and 'News &Events'. Users can also subscribe to the TechOceanS newsletter through a 'subscribe to news' button. Full details of the website, including screengrabs and layout descriptions are provided in Deliverable 2.1 – Project website, which provides an overview of the project website development, functions and services. The website will be publicly accessible from 16 December 2020.

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[1] http://www.eurosfaire.prd.fr/7pc/documents/1271333123_project_website_guidelines_en.pdf

3.4. Social Media accounts

Social networking is an important part of the TechOceanS engagement strategy. A dedicated Twitter account (https://twitter.com/TechOceanS) for the project was created at the start of project (October 2020 – M1) and is used to post and share relevant information. The Twitter page is maintained by WP2 leader AquaTT and project-related tweets are posted regularly in accordance with the H2020 social media guide for EU-funded projects.[2] An additional social media presence of a dedicated LinkedIn group to target professional audiences was established in November 2020 – M2. TechOceanS will make effective use of both social media platforms to connect with both existing and potential partners and to share project activities with a wide range of key target audiences.

3.5. Annual Newsletters

An annual newsletter will be developed and shared widely through the project mailing list. The first newsletter will be published in M12 (October 2021) and will showcase project updates, interviews with partners, key events of interest and other relevant information about the project. The project website will include an option for visitors to subscribe to the project newsletter.

3.6. PowerPoint Presentations at scientific/technological events

TechOceanS will host series of events during the project lifetime including consortium meetings, training events on observing technologies (Task 7.4), student-focussed events and sessions at project meetings (Task 7.3), networking events, a science-policy panel meeting in Brussels (Task 12.2) and will attend key conferences relating to ocean observation, oceanography, sensors and water biogeochemistry in order to promote the project and its results. These events and other project activities will be widely promoted through social media campaigns, issuing of press releases, promotion on the project website and the development of additional resources as required.

3.6.1. Power Point Presentation Template

A TechOceanS PowerPoint template has been developed to use at internal and external events when presenting the project and/or its outcomes. Font typeface, size, style, colour use and other presentation guidelines can be found in the TechOceanS Brand Guidelines. The template will be updated if needed over the course of the project. The PowerPoint presentation template is available to download from the TechOceanS SharePoint in the WP2 folder and can be requested from the WP2 leader AquaTT (keegan@aquatt.ie).

3.6.2. Deliverable Template

A Word template has been designed and developed for TechOceanS project deliverables, as well as internal and external reports. The template includes the TechOceanS branding across the document heading, formatting, font type, size and colours. This template will be updated if needed over the course of the project. The deliverable template is available to download from the TechOceanS SharePoint in the WP2 folder and can be requested from the WP2 leader AquaTT (keegan@aquatt.ie).

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[2] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/grants_manual/amga/soc-med-guide_en.pdf

3.7. Demonstration audio-visual material for stakeholder and public dissemination

The project will advance the creation and integration of innovative technologies that will be tested and displayed in extensive and comprehensive demonstration exercises, following best practices recommendations. These exercises will serve as the culmination of the work performed in TechOceanS, and they will be captured in a short yet comprehensive video. The video will be made available through the TechOceanS website and posted on YouTube.

3.8. Press Releases and Promotional Articles

The first press release, preceding the TechOceanS project kick-off meeting, was published on 9 November 2020. The press release was widely distributed through Cordis and Alpha Galileo and was also shared by TechOceanS partners NOC and PLOCAN through their respective media and social media accounts, where it has been shared over twenty times. It will be also be available from the TechOceanS project website on the Media page.

Further press releases and promotional articles will be created and widely promoted when major project outcomes are achieved.

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