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Empowering Research Talent: Building R&I Talent Ecosystems to Advance Careers in Health Innovation

D7.3 – Plan for stakeholder engagement

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Legend = Role in the Project: **COO**– Coordinator // **BEN**– Beneficiary // **AE** – Affiliated Entity // **AP** – Associated Partner

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1.2. Revision Control

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V1	First version	23/03/2026	Draft
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1.3. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
CPGP	Career Path Guidance Platform
CoP	Community of Practice
D	Deliverable
ECRs	Early-Career Researchers
EC	European Commission
F2F	Face-to-Face
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HI	Health Innovation
HR	Human Resources
KER	Key Exploitable Result
M	Milestone
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
WP	Work Package
WS	Workshop

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BREATH project aims to build a sustainable Talent Ecosystem in Health Innovation across Catalonia, Flanders, and Lithuania, supporting Early-Career Researchers' career development, mobility, and retention. Central to this effort is stakeholder engagement, which ensures that universities, research organisations, industry, policy actors, and career professionals actively contribute to shaping career pathways, training programmes, and guidance services aligned with labour market needs.

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan sets out the objectives and purpose of engagement, the methods used to identify and analyse stakeholders, and the processes for maintaining a GDPR-compliant database. It details key stakeholder groups, communication strategies, planned activities, tools and channels, and ethics considerations, and templates to support implementation. Guided by transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability, the plan fosters dialogue, trust, and collaboration, ensuring that BREATH's outcomes are practical, impactful, and sustainable across regional and European Health Innovation ecosystems.

1. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The engagement of stakeholder is essential for the BREATH project, as it seeks to build a sustainable Talent Ecosystem in Health Innovation (HI) management across three European regions (Catalonia, Flanders, and Lithuania). The project aims to strengthen researchers' career development, mobility, and retention by fostering collaboration between academic institutions, industry actors, policy stakeholders, and career development professionals. Achieving these objectives requires the active participation of stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle to ensure that the proposed career paths, training programmes, and career guidance services reflect real labour market needs and effectively support Early-Career Researchers (ECRs) in navigating diverse career opportunities within the health innovation ecosystem.

The success of BREATH relies on the meaningful engagement of a wide range of actors, including universities and research organisations, healthcare and biotechnology companies, innovation intermediaries, policy makers, career advisors, training providers, and ECR communities. Through participatory activities envisioned such as ecosystem consultations, co-creation workshops, communities of practice, and pilot initiatives, stakeholders will contribute to identifying skills gaps, defining career pathways, developing targeted training modules, and improving institutional career guidance services. This collaborative approach ensures that the project outcomes are grounded in practical needs, aligned with evolving labour market demands, and capable of generating lasting institutional and policy impact, as well as useful for understanding current talent management practices and needs, as well as for fostering a collaborative approach to joint actions.

In this context, the plan for stakeholder engagement identifies the key objectives for engagement, the actors that are relevant in the context of the project and outlines the project's methodology and approach for interacting and communicating with them strategically throughout the project. The plan also outlines the planned activities that require their involvement, ensuring that relevant actors are involved at the appropriate stages of the project and that communication is tailored to their interests and expected contributions.

The stakeholder engagement plan is closely linked to stakeholder identification, analysis, and management. These steps are essential for understanding stakeholders' roles within the health innovation ecosystem, their motivations for engagement, and the most appropriate channels and formats for collaboration. A well-structured engagement approach helps build trust among participants, foster knowledge exchange between academia and non-academic sectors, and ensure that the project effectively addresses the needs of both researchers and employers.

The present plan follows **key principles of effective stakeholder engagement, including transparency, inclusiveness, responsiveness, and accountability**. These principles guide the project's efforts to promote open dialogue, encourage diverse participation across the health innovation ecosystem, and ensure that stakeholders' perspectives are continuously integrated into project activities and outputs.

2. OBJECTIVES OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The stakeholder engagement strategy of BREATH is designed to ensure inclusive, transparent, and sustained collaboration with key actors across all phases of the project. It focuses on creating the conditions for meaningful, context-sensitive involvement that reflects the project's commitment to strengthening talent ecosystems in Health Innovation (HI) and supporting the career development of Early-Career Researchers (ECRs). By actively involving relevant stakeholders from academia, industry, policy, and innovation ecosystems, the strategy aims to generate practical solutions that respond to labour market needs and promote long-term impact across institutional, regional, and European research and innovation landscapes. The following objectives guide this engagement strategy:

- **Facilitate meaningful and timely participation of identified stakeholders throughout BREATH activities**, ensuring their expertise and feedback inform key stages such as ecosystem mapping, career path identification, skills assessment, and the co-creation of training programmes and guidance services.
- **Enable Early-Career Researchers and ecosystem actors to actively contribute to the design of career development pathways**, by providing participatory spaces for consultation and co-creation that help align training opportunities, skills development, and career guidance with the needs of the Health Innovation labour market.
- **Foster long-term collaboration and trust between academic and non-academic actors within the Health Innovation ecosystem**, including universities, research organisations, healthcare and biotechnology industries, innovation intermediaries, career development professionals, and policy institutions.
- **Ensure diversity of perspectives and representation across the health innovation ecosystem, by engaging stakeholders from different sectors**, institutional types, and regional contexts in Catalonia, Flanders, and Lithuania, while also incorporating the views and aspirations of ECRs from diverse disciplinary and professional backgrounds.
- **Promote awareness and shared understanding of career opportunities and skills needs in Health Innovation**, by collaboratively identifying emerging career paths, highlighting in-demand competencies, and contributing to the development of guidance tools such as the Career Path Guidance Platform (CPGP) that support informed career decision-making for researchers.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

A structured process was carried out prior to developing the plan to ensure that all activities, including stakeholder engagement, effectively select their target audiences, are supported by appropriate resources, and follow a well-managed contact flow.

This section presents the process (see Figure 1), explaining the purpose and objectives of each step, as well as the key outcomes that will be elaborated in the subsequent sections.

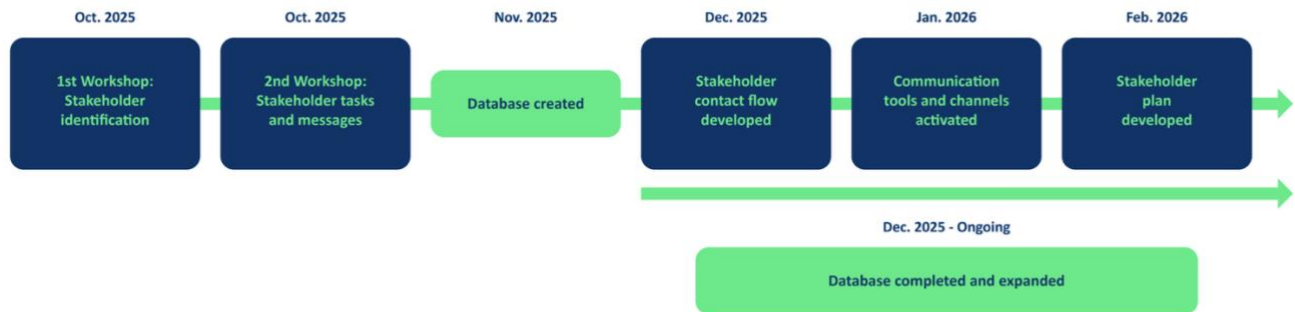


Figure 1. Process to come up with the Plan for Stakeholder Engagement.

1st Workshop: Stakeholder identification workshop

- **Date:** Oct. 2nd, 2025
- **Context:** BREATH Pre-Kick-Off Meeting
- **Concept and objectives:**

Based on the stakeholder groups defined in the Grant Agreement (Researchers, HR units, Industry, Policy and Decision Makers, Academia & Networks, and Civil Society), the objective of the workshop was to initiate the mapping of key stakeholders. This involved identifying, on the one hand, relevant internal contacts within partner organisations and, on the other hand, strategic external contacts beyond those organisations.

The workshop aimed to provide an initial overview of the stakeholders already engaged by the different partners, distinguishing between those essential for internal communication and project implementation and those whose involvement would add value to project tasks.

- **Workshop dynamic:**

The workshop was conducted online, using a Miro board as the main platform for the activity. The board was divided into separate sections, with one board per partner. Each partner's board was further split into two sub-sections: external stakeholders and internal stakeholders. Partners were given time to brainstorm individually, followed by a plenary session where they shared and discussed their inputs.

- **Outcomes:**

Partners discussed the different tasks and the types of input required from each stakeholder group and shared more detailed information on the stakeholders identified. All stakeholders identified

during the workshop fell within the groups already defined in the GA. This confirmed that the existing stakeholder categories remained relevant for continuing the planned work, while also allowing for reflection on whether these categories may need to be expanded.

pre-KOM stakeholders WS identification

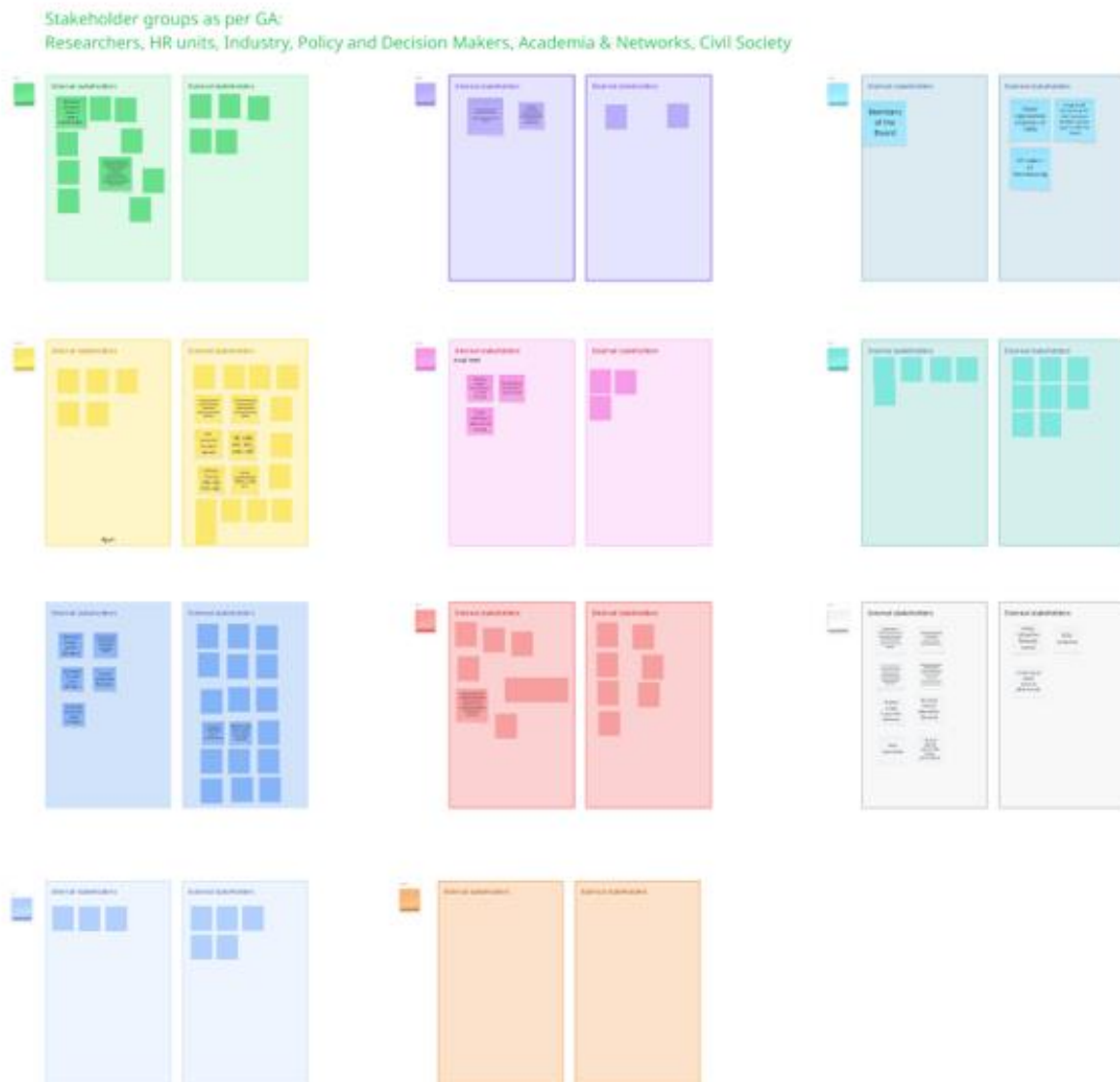


Figure 2. Overview of the first WS dynamic.

2nd Workshop: Stakeholder identification workshop

- **Date:** Oct. 17th, 2025
- **Context:** BREATH Kick-Off Meeting
- **Concept and objectives:**

Building on the outcomes of the first workshop, where the main stakeholder groups were identified and validated, this second workshop aimed to deepen the understanding of those stakeholders. The focus shifted from who the stakeholders are to how they relate to the project and how the project should engage with them.

Specifically, the workshop wanted to ensure a shared understanding among partners on what the project would require from each stakeholder group and define what the project could realistically offer in return. It also wanted to position stakeholders within a stakeholder engagement matrix, categorizing them as latents, promoters, apathetics, or defenders, based on their level of interest and influence to then shape the requests in a coordinated manner when required.

- **Workshop dynamic:**

The workshop was conducted in an in-person setting and partners were divided into three groups according to the different project ecosystems (Belgium, Catalonia, and Lithuania) to acknowledge regional differences in stakeholder landscapes. The groups:

1. Identified the relevant stakeholder groups within their ecosystem and assigning locally meaningful names to ensure contextual accuracy.
2. Reflected on what the project would need from each stakeholder group and what it could offer them in return.
3. Placed each stakeholder group within the engagement matrix based on perceived interest and influence.
4. Presented their input to enable learning and alignment among partners.

- **Outcomes:**

The workshop provided WP7 input that helped to have an overview of the project's stakeholder landscape across the different ecosystems. It enabled the clear identification and categorisation of stakeholder groups, as well as a shared understanding of their roles, levels of interest and influence, and their positioning within the engagement matrix. The exercise also clarified what could be requested from each stakeholder group and what the project could offer in return.

These insights formed the necessary foundation for the development of targeted messages on the project's impact for different stakeholder groups, the creation and structuring of the project's stakeholder database, and the initial reflection on the most appropriate communication channels and tools to effectively reach and engage each category of stakeholders.



Figure 3. Overview of the second WS dynamic.

Setting up the stakeholder database

Following the workshop, a request was launched to all partners to complete a shared stakeholder database. This database incorporated the stakeholder categories defined during the workshop and included key information such as the types of tasks or activities for which each stakeholder could be contacted, the corresponding region, and other relevant details to support engagement planning.

A dedicated section of this document provides a detailed description of the structure, fields, and use of this database.

Definition of the stakeholder contact flow

- Context:

As project activities began, a possible overlap in stakeholder outreach efforts was identified across different work packages and tasks. We identified a risk of stakeholders being contacted in parallel without clear coordination, and responsibilities regarding who should initiate contact, who owned the relationship, and how communication should be tracked. To avoid a risk of duplicated communication, inconsistent messaging, and reduced effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, the decision was made to define a coherent process for project activities requiring stakeholder contact.

- **Flow definition:**

As part of the stakeholder engagement support activities developed in close coordination with the project coordination, a standardised stakeholder contact flow was defined. This is further explained in section 6.1.

However, in short, the purpose of this flow was to ensure clarity of roles, consistency of messaging, and efficient coordination across the consortium whenever stakeholder contact is required. The defined flow established a common sequence of steps applicable to most stakeholder engagement activities. It was shared and approved by the consortium and will be refined if needed as the project advances.

4. KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

4.1. List of key stakeholders (WS outputs)

The stakeholder identification exercise conducted during the second workshop resulted in a broad and diverse list of actors:

Table 1. List of key stakeholders.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Advisory / Career Development Department • Training unit / Department • HHRR Unit / Department • Department • PhD Students Association • Postdoctoral Associations • Alumni Association • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean Office • Doctoral Programme Coordination Unit • Universities Network / Umbrella Association • Association • Hospitals Network • Professionals Association • EC-related organization / initiative • EC representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University • Hospital • Healthcare provider • Spin off / Start-up • SME • Pharmaceutical company • Insurance company • For-profit organization • Non-profit research organization • Research institute • Education provider • IGO organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-profit foundation • Cluster member • Incubator • Consultant • Regulatory agency • Investor / Investing Agency • Public authority
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To facilitate analysis, engagement planning, and communication activities, it was necessary to group these stakeholders into broader and more manageable categories. Six overarching categories were defined.

Table 2. Classification of key stakeholders.

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Types Identified
Early-Career Researchers (ECRs)	PhD Students Association; Postdoctoral Associations; Alumni Association; Faculty
Career Advisors, Talent Managers, and Career Development Professionals	Career Advisory / Career Development Department; Training Unit / Department; HR Unit / Department
Business and Industry Actors within the Health Innovation Ecosystem	Spin-offs / Start-ups; SMEs; Pharmaceutical companies; Insurance companies; For-profit organisations; Cluster members; Incubators; Investors / Investing agencies
Universities and Research Organisations	Universities; University Departments; Dean's Office; Doctoral Programme Coordination Unit; University Networks / Umbrella Associations; Research institutes; Non-profit research organisations; Education providers
Policy Makers, Public Authorities, and Funding Bodies	Public authorities; Regulatory agencies; EC-related organisations / initiatives; EC representatives
Civil Society and Wider Innovation Ecosystem Actors	Hospitals; Healthcare providers; Hospital Networks; Professional Associations; Associations; Non-profit foundations; Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs); Consultants

The grouping was carried out based on the primary role that each stakeholder type plays within the ecosystem and their expected interaction with the project that is further developed below.

- **Early-Career Researchers (ECRs)**

Early-Career Researchers, including doctoral candidates and recent PhD graduates, represent the primary beneficiaries of the BREATH project. Their engagement is essential to ensure that the identified career paths, training modules, and guidance services respond to the real needs, aspirations, and challenges faced by researchers at the early stages of their careers. ECRs will contribute insights on career expectations, perceived skills gaps, and barriers to career mobility within and beyond academia. Their participation will also be central during the pilot phase, where they will test the capacity-building programmes, personalised career guidance services, and the Career Path Guidance Platform (CPGP).

- **Career Advisors, Talent Managers, and Career Development Professionals**

This stakeholder group includes professionals responsible for supporting researchers' career development within universities and research organisations, such as career advisors, talent managers,

human resources professionals, and career centre staff. Their role is critical in shaping and implementing institutional career guidance services. Within BREATH, these stakeholders will contribute to the co-creation and refinement of improved career support mechanisms, participate in the Community of Practice (CoP) established by the project, and provide feedback on the usability and effectiveness of tools such as the Career Path Guidance Platform.

- **Business and Industry Actors within the Health Innovation Ecosystem**

This group includes companies, startups, industry clusters, and innovation actors operating in sectors such as biotechnology, medical technologies, pharmaceuticals, and digital health. Their participation is key to ensuring that the career paths and skills frameworks developed within BREATH reflect current and emerging labour market needs. Industry stakeholders will contribute insights into the competencies required in the health innovation sector, support the identification of relevant career opportunities beyond academia, and facilitate collaboration between research organisations and industry actors.

- **Universities and Research Organisations**

Universities, research institutes, and other academic organisations are central actors in the BREATH Talent Ecosystem. These institutions provide training, mentoring, and career support to researchers and therefore play a crucial role in implementing institutional changes that strengthen research career management. Within the project, they will participate in ecosystem mapping, co-creation activities, and the development and implementation of action plans aimed at improving career guidance services and aligning training opportunities with labour market demands.

- **Policy Makers, Public Authorities, and Funding Bodies**

This stakeholder group includes policy makers and representatives from local, regional, national, and European institutions responsible for shaping research, innovation, and talent development policies. It also includes funding agencies, policy networks, and initiatives such as EURAXESS that support researcher mobility and career development. Their engagement is important for ensuring that the project's findings, recommendations, and best practices inform policy discussions and contribute to improving research career frameworks and talent management strategies at institutional, national, and European levels.

- **Civil Society and Wider Innovation Ecosystem Actors**

Civil society organisations, regional innovation stakeholders, and other actors interested in the societal impact of research and innovation represent an additional stakeholder group within the BREATH ecosystem. Their involvement contributes to increasing awareness of the broader value of research careers and the role of health innovation in addressing societal challenges. Engaging these stakeholders also supports the dissemination of project results and encourages dialogue between research institutions and society.

4.2. Give and take messages

Alongside defining the main target groups, the analysis of the workshop results included the definition **give-and-take messages** between BREATH and its main stakeholder and audience groups to understand mutual benefits and thus be able to amplify overall impact. During the project **kick-off meeting**, a **workshop** took place to jointly identify each audience’s **impact messages**, which then were organized to clarify **what each audience can contribute to BREATH** and **what BREATH can deliver to them**. The resulting impact messages are summarized in the following tables and have been considered for the development of the project key messages (table 1 below) as well as for the future development of tools, resources and materials in the project.

Table 3. Give and take messages per stakeholder group.

Early Career Researchers - Impact messages
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Their expertise, research potential, and willingness to engage in new career paths (KER 1,4).
Input on their career needs, motivations, and skills gaps.
Engagement in the pilot across the three innovation ecosystems.
Participation in mapping skills needs, piloting trainings, and testing personalised guidance tools (KER 8,9).
Feedback to improve the tools that they will be provided in the context of the project (KER 5).
What can the project provide?
Set of career pathways aligned with HI sector demands and EU competence frameworks (KER 4).
Access to the Career Path Guidance Platform (CPGP) for career exploration, recommendations, and decision-making (KER 5). +
Training opportunities that have been co-designed by academia and industry and are aligned with the needs of both (KER 8,9).
Micro-credentials for improved employability and mobility (KER 9).
Increased readiness for careers in the health innovation sector including biotech, digital health, pharma, entrepreneurship, and policy.
Career Support Professionals (career advisors, talent managers, HR/career centres)
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Feedback and case studies to shape guidelines and monitoring tools. Expertise in researcher support, guidance practices, competency mapping and HR development.
Contribution to map the talent services across regions.
Participation in co-creation workshops, career path design, and the Community of Practice.
Implementation of institutional change actions.
What can the project provide?
Clear frameworks for analysing skills needs and career paths (KER 1).
Access to the CPGP to support personalised guidance for researchers (KER 5).
Good practices and guidelines to strengthen and professionalise career services (KER 6).

A standardised monitoring framework for evaluating guidance impact (KER 11)
Action plans reinforcing long-term career development structures (KER 12).
Academic institutions (universities, doctoral schools)
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Expertise and institutional knowledge for mapping needs and career services.
Expertise in curriculum design, quality assurance, and training delivery.
Engagement in the pilot across the three innovation ecosystems.
Feedback to improve the tools that they will be provided in the context of the project.
Implementation of institutional change actions and partnership agreements (KER 2, 3, 12).
What can the project provide?
Assessment of their Talent Ecosystem needs and external/internal constraints (KER 1)
Partnership agreements to strengthen collaboration with industry and government (KER 2, 3)
Detailed career-path research and skills insights to guide curriculum adaptation (KER 6, 7).
Career Path Guidance Platform and a set of good practices and guidelines to improve career services (KER 5)
Monitoring frameworks and evidence to support institutional change and actions plan to ensure sustainability beyond the project (KER 11).
Industry, SMEs in the Health Innovation sector
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Insights into labour HI sector roles, market needs, skill gaps.
Validation of career paths, skill requirements, and training relevance
Participation and implementation of partnership agreements and cross-sector governance.
Contributions to mentoring, pilot activities, or collaborations
Support for monitoring and adoption of responsible employer principles
Identify barriers in talent management.
What can the project provide?
Access to a pool of trained researchers aligned with HI sector needs.
Tools to identify future roles, skills gaps, and recruitment strategies (KER 4, 5)
Good practices in career development that improve HR processes and attract talent (KER 6)
Collaboration structures enhancing innovation (regional and multi-regional partnership agreement) (KER 2, 3)
Career Path Guidance Platform and a set of good practices and guidelines to improve career services (KER 5, 6)
Policy briefs: Summary of key findings related to research talent management, including trends, challenges, and opportunities (KER 11).
Clusters and ecosystem intermediaries
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Ecosystem insights to inform the talent needs assessments (KER 1).
Support to reach industry, government, and other stakeholders of interest (KER 2, 3).
Support for mapping, dissemination, and cross-regional exchange (KER 4, 5, 6).

Contribution to shaping long-term action plans and policy recommendations (KER 11, 12).
Participation in piloting and evaluation phases (KER 8, 10).
What can the project provide?
Clear regional Talent Ecosystem requirements and gaps to guide cluster strategy (KER 1).
Strengthened regional and cross-regional partnership agreements for the ecosystem strengthening (KER 2, 3).
Insights on future skills, HI roles, and opportunities for cluster members (KER 4).
CPGP to support the clusters (KER 5).
Good practices, guidelines, and training modules to support members' HR development (KER 6, 7, 9).
Monitoring frameworks and policy briefs to guide cluster-level advocacy (KER 10, 11).
Policy makers and government (regional, national and EU-level)
How will we need them to be engaged in the project?
Insights on the strategic frameworks and regional priorities.
Engagement in validating recommendations at all three levels.
Participation in evaluation and sustainability planning (KER 10, 11, 12)
Improve recognition of researchers.
What can the project provide?
A detailed diagnosis of regional talent ecosystem needs and gaps (KER 1).
Evidence on skills trends, labour market needs, and talent paths (KER 4).
Monitoring frameworks that inform future research policy (KER 10).
Policy briefs: Summary of key findings related to research talent management, including trends, challenges, and opportunities (KER 11).
Sustainable action plans that support long-term institutional transformation (KER 12).

4.3. Key messages and link to the communication plan

This plan is closely aligned with the communication and dissemination strategy of the project (**D7.2 Communication and Dissemination Plan and Tools**). The communication plan provides the overarching framework for how the project interacts with its stakeholders, while the present deliverable focuses specifically on how these stakeholders will be actively involved in project activities.

D7.2 outlines the key messages that will be communicated to the different target audiences, as well as the main communication objectives, tone, and examples of tailored messaging. The plan also defines the main communication channels and tools that will be used throughout the project, ensuring that information is delivered to relevant audiences in a timely and accessible manner.

The communication plan also incorporates a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy with a methodology focused on user needs and project audiences, including Early-Career Researchers, career advisors, industry actors, universities, and policymakers. This approach supports the visibility and accessibility of BREATH's results and tools, particularly digital resources such as the project website and, in the future, the Career Path Guidance Platform.

Together, both documents ensure consistency between communication efforts and stakeholder participation.

5. STAKEHOLDER DATABASE

The online stakeholder database is a central component of BREATH's engagement infrastructure. It was set up in November 2025 after the project kick-off meeting to log all contacts relevant to the project, classifying them according to the groups they represent and outlining their expected contributions. The database is designed to be flexible and continuously updated to meet evolving project needs and ensure accountability, traceability and GDPR compliance.

Stakeholders are identified and engaged through multiple coordinated channels:

- **Consortium partner networks** serve as primary sources of stakeholder recruitment, leveraging established relationships and trusted connections.
- **Project channels** including the project's social media and website can result in interactions with users that can provide input and can be relevant for the database.
- **Sister projects and similar initiatives** with shared thematic interests.
- **Stakeholder interactions during meetings**, dissemination events, public interventions or bilateral exchanges.

Project partners are responsible for providing accurate and complete information for each stakeholder contact, including their role and nature of participation, using the standardised online form provided by WeDo. Stakeholders themselves can also request updates or exercise their rights under GDPR, such as access to or deletion of their personal information.

5.1. Infrastructure and access

The database is hosted in the consortium's shared **SharePoint** space, a secure collaborative platform accessible to all partners. SharePoint implements robust technical, organisational, and administrative measures to protect the data it processes. The platform is fully compliant with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Each partner organisation in the consortium contact list has individual SharePoint access, granting autonomous access to the shared database. This allows partners to update information directly, such as logging new interactions, providing feedback, or recording stakeholder input, while maintaining a coherent and transparent record.

Central responsibility for database curation lies with WeDo, which manages all additions, deletions, and edits to ensure data consistency and relevance.

5.2. Data structure and fields

The stakeholder database is structured to capture detailed information on all project contacts, their roles, and their engagement activities. Each entry is organised into the following fields:

- **ID No:** A unique identifier automatically assigned to each entry to ensure traceability. This field should not be modified.
- **Organisation name:** The full name of the partner organisation or institution.
- **Country – 2 Letter Code:** The code representing the country of the organisation.
- **Organisation Type / Unit Type:** Classification of the organisation based on the specific categorisation from the 2nd workshop outcomes including:
 - **SG:** Lists the main stakeholder groups or category within the project context (less specific than the previous categorisation):
 - Citizens
 - Civil society
 - Policy
 - Industry
 - Academia
 - Public sector
 - Institutional decision-makers
 - Linked organizations
 - Institutional participants
- **Contact person full name and job title:** Full name and job title of the primary contact for the organisation.
- **Contact email:** Official email address of the contact person.
- **Contact owner:** The partner organisation or individual responsible for managing the relationship with this contact. They are the ones choosing which information to share in the previous fields.
- **Type of Interaction:** Description of the type of engagement (e.g., interview, survey, workshop participation).
- **1st Activity to contribute to:** Indicates the initial project activity the contact is expected to engage in.
- **Timeline:** Planned timeframe for engagement with the contact.
- **Task-specific fields.** These fields track stakeholder participation across specific project activities. The tasks currently listed include the ones below and will be adapted as the stakeholder engagement in the following tasks starts to shape:
 - T1.1 Interview about the TE: Records participation in thematic interviews.
 - T2.1 Provide Feedback on the Survey Questions: Tracks contributions to survey question review.
 - T1.1 Survey for HR/Talent/Training Managers: Captures responses from targeted HR or training managers.
 - T2.1 Survey for PhD Holders: Records feedback from PhD-level stakeholders.
 - T2.2 Delphi Study: Indicates involvement in the Delphi study rounds.
 - T1.2 Regional Workshops: Records attendance and contributions in regional workshops.
 - T1.2 Provide Feedback on the Regional Partnership Agreement: Tracks input on partnership agreements.
 - T1.3 Online Meetings on Institutional Changes Aligned with the 2023 European Charter for Researchers: Captures participation in online meetings discussing institutional alignment with the Charter.

The tasks have been listed in chronological order since the project implementation started.

This structure allows the project to maintain a comprehensive, transparent, and traceable record of all stakeholder contacts, their roles, and their engagement across activities, supporting both internal monitoring and reporting obligations.

5.3. GDPR compliance

The management and use of the stakeholder database fully comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which governs the collection, processing, storage, and sharing of personal data within the EU.

All registration and engagement forms used in the project-such as those for events, workshops or newsletters- include GDPR-compliant informed consent statements. These clearly explain how data will be used, the rights of participants regarding their data, and the procedures for withdrawing consent. Stakeholders must actively confirm their agreement to data use before their personal information is stored or processed.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES

With the key stakeholder groups identified and the stakeholder database established, a coordinated communication flow was defined as project activities began. In parallel, a preliminary plan of activities requiring stakeholder engagement was developed. This planning process allows task leaders and WP7 to anticipate outreach needs, coordinate engagement effort, and ensure that communication with stakeholders is timely.

6.1. Communication with stakeholders (flow)

As the implementation of the BREATH project began and activities across multiple work packages were initiated, the consortium identified a potential overlap in stakeholder outreach efforts. Given that several tasks involve interaction with similar stakeholder groups there was a risk that stakeholders could be contacted in parallel by different partners without sufficient coordination.

Such situations could lead to duplicated communication, inconsistent messaging, or uncertainty regarding responsibilities within the consortium. In particular, questions arose regarding who should initiate stakeholder contact, who should manage ongoing relationships, and how interactions should be documented and tracked across the project.

To mitigate these risks and ensure a coherent and efficient engagement process, WP7 proposed a structured stakeholder contact flow that was approved by the consortium.

The stakeholder contact flow serves several strategic purposes within the project:

- **Coordination across the consortium:** ensuring that all partners are aware of stakeholder engagement activities and that outreach efforts are aligned across work packages.
- **Clear allocation of responsibilities:** defining who initiates contact, who manages stakeholder relationships, and who monitors engagement activities.
- **Consistency of messaging:** ensuring that stakeholders receive clear, coherent, and aligned information about the project and its activities.

- **Efficient use of stakeholder networks:** leveraging the existing relationships and networks of consortium partners.
- **Traceability and monitoring:** enabling the project to track engagement activities, document interactions, and monitor progress against stakeholder engagement objectives.

With these objectives in mind, a standardised stakeholder contact flow has been defined. The flow establishes a common sequence of steps applicable to most project activities requiring stakeholder engagement, while still allowing flexibility depending on the specific context of each task. The flow will remain a living procedure, meaning that it can be refined or adapted as the project progresses and as new stakeholder engagement needs emerge.

The stakeholder contact flow is illustrated in Figure 4, which provides a visual overview of the steps involved in coordinating stakeholder outreach within the BREATH consortium.

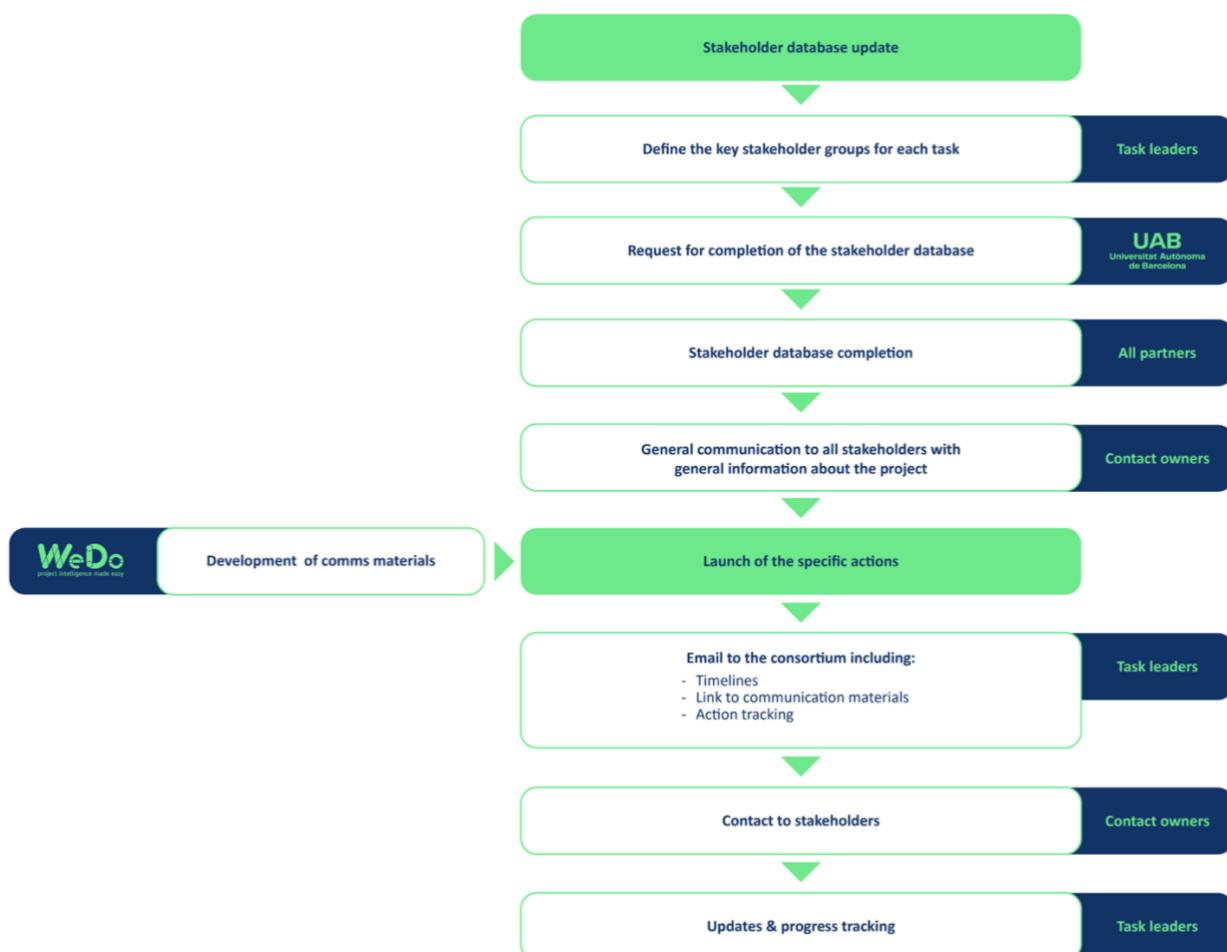


Figure 4. Stakeholder contact flow.

The stakeholder contact flow begins with the **identification of the relevant stakeholder groups** that should be involved in a specific activity. This step is typically carried out by the task leaders, who determine the target stakeholders based on the objectives, scope, and expected outcomes of the activity.

The task leaders can request **WP7 support in the preparation of the materials** that may include general information about the project, invitations to specific activities, or supporting materials explaining the objectives of the engagement initiative.

Once the materials are ready, task leaders initiate the outreach process by informing the consortium through a communication, typically via email. This message includes the **timeline of the activity, links to relevant communication materials, and instructions for tracking** engagement actions. If required, consortium members can **update the stakeholder database**, based on the targeted groups.

Following this step, **contact owners proceed with direct outreach to stakeholders**, using the agreed approach and ensuring that communication reflects the coordinated messaging established by the consortium. In the database, **contact owners** are always identified (usually partners who already have an established relationship with the stakeholder) and they are responsible for coordinating interactions and ensuring that communication is conducted in a consistent and respectful manner.

Throughout the process, **task leaders provide updates on the progress and outcomes** of the engagement activities, allowing the consortium to monitor participation levels, track stakeholder responses, and ensure transparency in stakeholder interactions.

6.2. Timeline and activities

By identifying stakeholder engagement moments in advance, the project can prepare the necessary communication materials, align messaging, and ensure that interactions with stakeholders are carried out efficiently and strategically.

In March 2026, a tool was developed to anticipate tasks requiring stakeholder involvement and consequently support from WP7. The tool (see Figure 5) is currently active and was used to produce an initial tentative timeline. It also supported the identification of specific actions requiring support, the stakeholder groups involved in each task (based on predefined group categories), and the type of support expected for each action. As tasks approach, the tool will be continuously updated with this information, ensuring that all necessary details are available in advance and enabling well-planned, effective engagement throughout the project.



Figure 5. Tool to define stakeholder involvement timelines and support needed.

The tool is Miro-based and shows all WPs, their associated tasks, including the task leads, and outlines the subtasks expected under each task. For each subtask, the leading partner is required to specify the anticipated start and end dates, as well as the types of stakeholders to be involved (based on the stakeholder typologies identified and refined through previous workshops). In addition, the expected type of support from WP7 must be indicated, drawing on a predefined list of support actions that WP7 can provide.

Figure 6 below presents the timeline indicating when stakeholder support will be needed based on the first iteration of the exercise. A complementary list describing the activities in more detail is provided below.

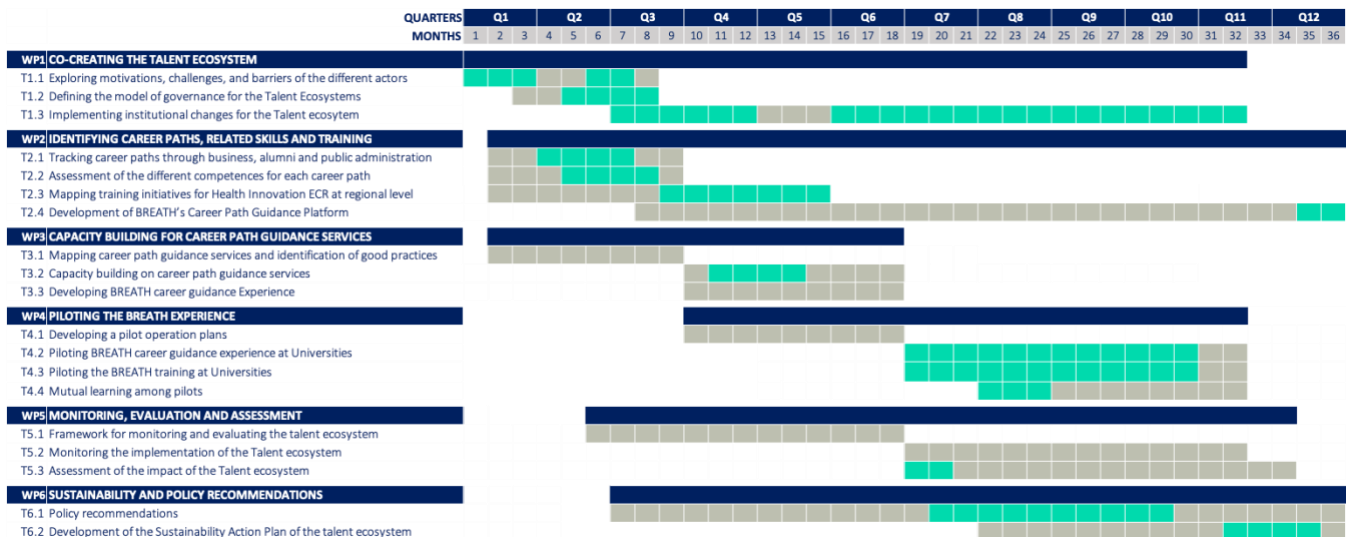


Figure 6. Stakeholder support timeline.

The timeline presented above is further elaborated in the two tables below, which provide a more detailed overview of the key activities requiring stakeholder support and the nature of the support under each of the tasks. The first table (Table 4) includes actions that have already been undertaken, while the second outlines actions planned for later stages of the project (Table 5). These upcoming actions will require additional refinement and definition of the specific steps to be implemented when the time comes.

Table 4. Subtasks and support actions for stakeholder engagement.

Description	Timepoint	Undertaken actions
T1.1: Exploring motivations, challenges, and barriers of the different actors		
Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with at least 9 individuals related to each region involving key stakeholders identified by the partners (Target: 27).	M1-M3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder database refinement Invitation email templates Basic information about the project brochure
Stakeholder participation in a large-scale survey. Online questionnaire distributed across partner ecosystems (Target: 200 responses from across ecosystems).	M3-M6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder database refinement Development of a social media campaign Email template Website section Survey distribution action brainstorming workshop facilitation Distribution of the shortened version of the survey

T1.2: Defining the model of governance for the Talent Ecosystems		
Participation in regional co-creation workshops	M2-M4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email templates to invite the stakeholders to the workshop
Co-creation activities during workshops	M2-M4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support in the conceptualisation of the workshop dynamic Tools for the dynamic provided
T2.1: Tracking career paths through Business, Alumni and PA		
Participation of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in the career-tracking survey (Target: 200 responses from across ecosystems).	M3-M6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder database refinement Development of a social media campaign Email template Website section Survey distribution action brainstorming workshop facilitation
T2.2: Assessment of the different competences for each career path		
Three online meetings to jointly analyse the labour market (aligned with Task 2.1).	M4-M6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder database refinement Support for the organisation of an informative online webinar Development of a social media campaign Email template Website section

Table 5. Upcoming subtasks and expected timeline.

Task	Subtasks involving stakeholders	Expected timepoint
WP1		
T1.2: Defining the model of governance for the Talent Ecosystems	Participation of regional representatives in partnership agreements	M4-M9
	Support from external ecosystem actors- Engagement with Pact for Skills Support Services to help establish the multi-regional and regional partnerships in the Health Industry sector.	M4-M9
T1.3: Implementing institutional changes for the Talent Ecosystem in line with the Charter for Researchers	The Talent Ecosystem will implement actions defined in the Partnership for HI, particularly those requiring institutional changes among training providers and employers of researchers, including	M16-M32

Task	Subtasks involving stakeholders	Expected timepoint
	universities, businesses, and public entities.	
	Decision-makers from partner institutions will meet at least three times to share best practices on the implementation of actions aligned with the Charter for Researchers and co-define institutional changes to be implemented	M7-M14
	Evaluation of the different processes, and cultures within partner institutions.	M29-M32
WP2		
T2.3: Mapping regional HI ECR training and co-designing micromodules for diverse career paths	Gathering data from key informers, such as HR representatives (meeting Ms2) to map training programs focused on transversal, green, digital, entrepreneurial, and science for policy skills available to HI ECR.	M3-M13
	Co-design of the Capacity Building Programme for each career path will be with academic and non-academic actors (D2.2)	M9-M23
WP3		
T3.2: Capacity building on career path guidance services	Create the community of mutual learning that will bring together HR managers from universities and business.	M9-M12
	Support in the organisation of the F2F meeting.	M9-M12
WP4		
T4.2: Piloting BREATH career guidance experience at universities	Organisation of initial career guidance sessions, followed by ongoing support activities aimed to guide ECR in the different career paths and associated acquisition of competences.	M19-M24
	Selection of ECR to participate in the BREATH Career Guidance Experience by the universities	M19-M24

Task	Subtasks involving stakeholders	Expected timepoint
T4.3: Piloting the BREATH training experience at universities	Effective implementation of the training, including the organization of various workshops, seminars, and activities, as well as the dissemination and enrolment of ECR.	M24-M32
T4.4: Mutual learning among pilots	Identifying further support structures for effective and sustainable implementation of ECR career path guidance and associated training programs.	M22-M32
	Three meetings (2 online for the follow up of the pilots and a F2F meeting at M30 to share experiences, challenges, and best practices)	M22-M32
WP5		
T5.1: Framework for monitoring and evaluating the Talent Ecosystem	M&E co-creation workshop during the definition of actions to be implemented by the Talent Ecosystem	M14-M16
T5.2: Monitoring the implementation of the Talent Ecosystem	Universities, clusters, and PA supported by UAB, will compile reports using semi-structured templates to gather quantitative (Likert-scale) and qualitative data (e.g., Most Significant Change approach) to assess progress on the evaluation areas from Task 5.1.	M19
	F2F data reflection meeting at M24, aligned with the mutual learning among pilots	M20-M30
T5.3: Assessment of the impact of the Talent Ecosystem	At least nine interviews (three per region: one ECR, one industry representative, and one PA representative) will be conducted using semistructured questionnaires.	M19-M24
	The evaluation results will be discussed and validated in a Virtual Validation Workshop with the SAB to identify areas for improvement and future challenges.	M30
WP6		
T6.1: Policy recommendations	Regional workshops on policy recommendations, participation in the	M30

Task	Subtasks involving stakeholders	Expected timepoint
	M30 meeting to contribute to 2nd Policy Brief	
	Support to identify the interest groups where the policy recommendations will be shared other than (i) openly sharing via the project’s website, and (ii) actively disseminating via the Network of Interest, the networks of our partners.	M32-M36
T6.2: Development of the Sustainability Action Plan of the Talent Ecosystem	Present achieved institutional changes to key stakeholders, demonstrate their societal, economic, and scientific impact, and co-create solid Action Plans	M22-M36
	Support to the 3 workshops (1 for each region) with key representatives from the partner regions	M22-M36

As project implementation progresses and timelines for actions become clearer, the consortium will continuously use and refine the tool’s inputs to enhance clarity and alignment. This may require revising the subtasks identified at this stage as implementation details become more defined.

All support provided will be systematically tracked and incorporated into the Final Communication, Dissemination, Engagement, and Exploitation Report (D7.4).

7. INITIAL TOOLS AND CHANNELS DEVELOPED

At the early stages of the project, a set of initial tools and communication channels were developed to support stakeholder engagement. The tools and channels described below are being used across several project tasks, including stakeholder mapping, workshop organisation, survey dissemination, and engagement with actors across the health innovation ecosystem.

7.1. Channels

Several communication channels have been established to reach and engage the different stakeholder groups identified during the stakeholder mapping process.

- **Social media platforms:** The project makes use of social media to communicate project updates, promote engagement opportunities, and increase visibility among relevant communities. In particular, LinkedIn is used to reach professional networks, researchers, innovation actors, and policy stakeholders.

- **Project website:** Dedicated sections of the project website have been created to provide information relevant to stakeholders.
- **Targeted email communication:** Email communication can be used as a primary channel for direct stakeholder engagement. Lists derived from the stakeholder database allow the consortium to share updates, invitations to events, and calls for participation in project activities such as surveys or workshops.
- **Collaboration with other initiatives and networks:** These collaborations support cross-promotion of activities and facilitate connections with additional stakeholder communities.

7.2. Tools

In addition to communication channels, a number of practical tools have been developed to support stakeholder engagement activities across project tasks.

- **Stakeholder database**
- **Email templates** for stakeholder outreach: Standardised email templates have been created to support consistent communication with stakeholders. These templates can be adapted to support engagement
- **Project information** brochure, one-pager and presentation: These communication tools can be used to provide stakeholders with clear and accessible information about the project's objectives, activities, and expected impact.
- **Social media campaign materials**
- **Workshop engagement tools:** Several tools have been designed to support the organisation and facilitation of stakeholder workshops.

Together, these channels and tools provide the foundation for the project's stakeholder engagement strategy and will continue to be refined and expanded as the project progresses.

8. ETHICS CONSIDERATIONS

BREATH is committed to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion across all stakeholder engagement activities. Specific efforts are made to ensure that:

- Stakeholder selection and recruitment **prioritise diversity of perspectives** and lived experiences.
- **Intersectional inclusion** is embedded in the design and implementation of engagement methodologies.
- **Monitoring mechanisms** are in place to track and evaluate representativeness and to detect potential imbalances or blind spots.
- Project communication is **free of bias and prejudice**, and uses language and imagery that is inclusive, respectful, and reflective of plural identities across Europe.
- **Gender representation is taken into account** in events, advisory structures, and co-design spaces, aiming where possible to achieve balance in voice and influence.