

# Strategy and Communications: update

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2016-17



Strategy and Communications brings together teams that were once distributed and worked independently: OIPA (HD), Strategy and Analysis (HD), External relations (EMBL-EBI). The new structure aims to integrate these teams so that they work coherently to represent the organisation in a consistent way. Strategic planning and reporting has now been brought within the same team as communications.

We are approaching the restructuring of the team in the following order of priority:

1. Build capacity so that we are able to change and take on new work.
2. Establish clear processes that define how we work internally and how we interface with and support others in the organisation.
3. Begin major projects.

We are well ahead with building capacity:

- recruited into key roles and integrated the resources that existed across sites
- building up an internship programme
- developed a budget that allows for support by external suppliers where required and appropriate

We are now looking at defining key processes, examples:

- How to gather stories from around EMBL that we should be telling via EMBL's channels. Editorial processes, including for EMBL Etc. magazine
- Design services

We are now starting to kick off some big projects. We will touch on some of those later in the presentation when we talk about deliverables.

## Functional areas

- Production
- Stakeholder relations
- Outreach and local communications
- Strategy and Analysis

We restructured our team to reflect four broad areas. These areas are functional rather than structural entities:

1. Production: The central production team drives content development (editorial, digital and design) for the whole organisation. At the moment production is very much demand driven and has a strong service focus. While supporting other parts of EMBL with production will remain an important activity, our goal is to work more strategically: shaping messaging about EMBL, advising on audience needs and the best communication channels to reach different audiences, developing new communications channels etc. For this reason it is important to involve Strategy and Communications early on in planning of communications and not only bring us in for execution.
2. Stakeholder relations: The Stakeholder Relations team supports the organisation's strategic goals by engaging in dialogue with key stakeholder groups, both internal and external to the organisation. It identifies key stakeholder groups, analyses their needs and concerns, advises EMBL management and staff on engagement strategies and manages EMBL's relationship with these groups.
3. Outreach and communications at EMBL's six sites with local stakeholders and campus partners. This requires work in the local languages in addition to English.
4. Supporting and advising the Director General in a variety of strategic and operational activities, including strategic planning and communication, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the institutional strategy, and developing EMBL's position on relevant policy issues.

Many team members assumed new functions. Strategy & Communications has 12 FTEs in Heidelberg and 6 FTEs in Hinxton. We are building up a rolling internship programme with 6 interns steady-state.

## Production: Design



**Art Director**  
Tabea Rauscher



**Senior Designer**  
Spencer Phillips



**Videographer**  
N.N.



**Design Intern**  
N.N.

In design we changed the existing structure and production model. We reshaped the role of an operational designer in Heidelberg into the more strategic role of an Art Director. Tabea leads on the development of EMBL's visual identity and coordinates design production. We are kicking off work on a new EMBL corporate identity, which Tabea leads.

Design production is done by Spencer Phillips at EMBL-EBI and in Heidelberg we have started to rely a lot more on external providers. Tabea focuses on building up design systems, processes and a network of external suppliers, who we outsource some of the production work to. Tabea is the internal contact for design requests liaises with external suppliers. We are currently recruiting for a design intern to further strengthen in-house production capacity.

There is a cost centre for outsourcing design work in the Strategy and Communications budget for work that supports EMBL institutional goals for the moment. We will be monitoring closely how costs develop and evaluate after the first year whether this is a good model or if in future we need a more distributed model to cover costs for design work. We cover the costs for projects that Tabea decides to outsource to suppliers she knows and selects. We do not refund or pay for design work other parts of the organisation engage in independently.

At EMBL-EBI a new role has been created for a videographer. Video production will support recruitment and training and feature EMBL scientists as thought leaders.

## Production: Digital



**Web & Collaborations  
Manager**  
Michael Müller



**Social Media  
Manager**  
Laura Howes



**Senior  
Communications Officer**  
Mary Todd-Bergmann



**Communications  
Officer**  
Rodica Petrushevski

Digital communications will move to the centre of EMBL Communications. The trend will be less print, more digital communications, because digital channels are faster, modern, more flexible, and can be tailored more readily to selective audiences.

The main project in this area will be the redesign of the EMBL website.

We also put a much bigger focus on social media. We hired a Social Media Manager in Heidelberg and strengthened this area also in Hinxton. Laura in Heidelberg and Rodica in Hinxton are developing a social media strategy for EMBL, guidelines and run workshops to support social media users at EMBL.

## Production: Editorial



**Editorial Manager**  
Adam Gristwood



**Core Content Manager**  
Sonia Furtado Neves



**Communications Officer**  
Oana Stroe



**Writer**  
Margaux Phares



**Writer**  
Ed Dadswell



**Writer**  
Annika Duda

The editorial team produces editorial content to be used across a variety of channels. They are developing processes for story gathering, story commissioning, approval processes with stakeholders. We established weekly editorial meetings for that where people can pitch ideas (Mondays, 10.30 CET, ATC B18). The editorial team is also producing a style guide to enable the EMBL community to communicate for EMBL.

We need to strike a balance between news writing and developing long-term content. At the moment we are very much driven by the news cycle still, but we would like to change that and bring long-term content more at the focus of production. We reshaped one of the positions to be in charge of core content. We are planning to develop an editorial theme calendar to guide content production.

## Stakeholder relations



**Head of  
External Relations**  
Lindsey Crosswell



**Internal  
Communications Manager**  
Chloe Cross



**Scientific Community  
Engagement Manager**  
Isabelle Kling

**& other EMBL teams**

### Media Relations



Oana Stroe



Sonia Furtado Neves



N.N.

Engaging in dialogue with key stakeholder groups, both internal and external to the organisation. Learning about their needs and interests and the best channels to reach them.

**EMBL-EBI External Relations:** Manages EMBL-EBI's relationships at a political and policy level, with a broad range of stakeholders throughout Europe and internationally

- Engagement with representatives of the EU, scientific institutions, funding bodies and policy makers in the Member States and beyond

### Media:

- Ongoing recruitment: Press Officer in Heidelberg, at EMBL-EBI Oana has been hired
- From a 'reactive' and 'publication driven' approach towards a proactive strategy
- Building long-term relationships with key journalists, helping them to tell the stories they want to tell about EMBL
- Media work needs to be done at two levels: internationally for EMBL as a whole and locally at all six sites in the local language

**Internal communications:** As a distributed organisation EMBL faces particular challenges in internal communication and creating a common sense of identity across sites, while giving room for local identities.

- Internal communications is very dispersed at EMBL. We created a dedicated role of an Internal Communications Manager to help coordinate this effort.
- Chloe started to gather information (surveys, interviews) and developed first formats for staff events (all-staff assemblies &etc.).

- The biggest project over the next months will be the redesign of the intranet.

**Scientific community (internal & external):** EMBL is well known in the biology community, but we can do better at engaging with this community and making it aware of all EMBL offers and how they can interact with us.

- Isabelle Kling acts is responsible for scientific community engagement in half of her time. One big aspect is developing channels to reach and engage with the community.

**Interface with other teams:** Not all relationships are mapped within the Strategy & Communications team: relationships with alumni, donors, industry, international relations, teachers and students are held by other departments, who we work with closely. We provide support in message development, production (as capacity allows) and dissemination where we have appropriate channels.



## Local communications



**Head of  
External Relations**  
Lindsey Crosswell



**Senior  
Communications Officer**  
Mary Todd-Bergmann



**Communications  
Coordinator GR & MR**  
Isabelle Kling



**Outreach and Local  
Communications Manager**  
Angela Michel



**Administrator**  
Isabel Heck



**Administrator**  
Haipeng Zhou

**Develop relationships at all sites:** local community and public, campus context and partners, local media relations. Each sites has very different needs.

### **Communications at all sites:**

- EMBL-EBI has very strong communications activities in the context of the WT Genome Campus and in the UK, which is handled by the External Relations team.
- EMBL Hamburg used to have Rosemary Wilson, who had a split role between training and communications. Kayla Cameron is coming in soon in Hamburg, but will first focus on administration.
- Isabelle dedicates half of her time to communications support for Grenoble and Monterotondo. She relays information from the sites to Strategy and Communications and vice versa and supports local communication activities, such as events, science fairs etc.
- Angela (soon Verena) organises public visits and events in Heidelberg (ca. 1000 visitors per year). These are currently bespoke and organised on-demand. We are at capacity for this programme and it requires a lot of time from researchers and core facility staff at the moment. We want to develop a more standardised public visitor programme that people can sign up for. We are also exploring the idea of a visitor experience in the new ITC building (if it gets funded),

## Strategy and analysis



**Strategy and  
Analysis Manager**  
Maria Grazia Magro



**Intern**  
N.N.

New portfolio within the communications team. This is not at the same scale as the other communications activities and we are working on integrating this better with the rest of the team. Closer alignment between institutional objectives and communications.

**Strategy development:** This activity is very cyclical at the moment and centres around the development of the EMBL programme and indicative scheme. We would like to turn this into a more continuous process.

**Analysis & reporting:** collecting and analysing statistics and indicators, reporting back to the member states, feeding them into the communications process

**DG support:** preparing speeches and presentation for the DG for diverse audiences

**Aspiration:** positioning EMBL in policy areas, e.g. scientific integrity  
There is a close connection to EMBL-EBI strategy teams.

## Deliverables

1. Communications strategy / core message development
2. New corporate identity
3. Proactive media engagement
4. EMBL-wide internal communications
5. Social media strategy
6. Strengthening local communications
7. Developing communications with the scientific community
8. Communications services and consultancy for the organisation
9. New websites

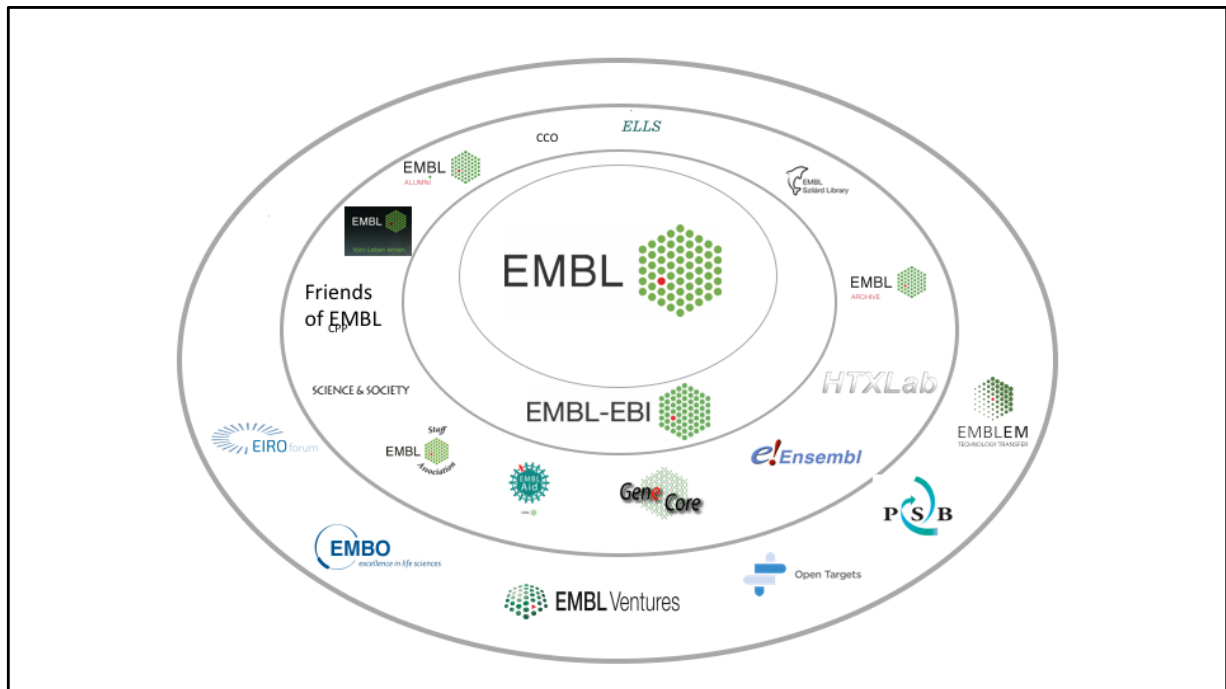
We have a number of long-term projects that we are working on, here are some of them.

## Deliverables

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9. **New websites**

We cannot cover all these areas in this presentation, although we're happy to answer questions on any of these at the end. We'll just touch on two major projects just now:

- A new corporate identity for EMBL
- New websites for EMBL



An organisation's brand reflects its identity and encapsulates things such as: tone, messaging, audience.

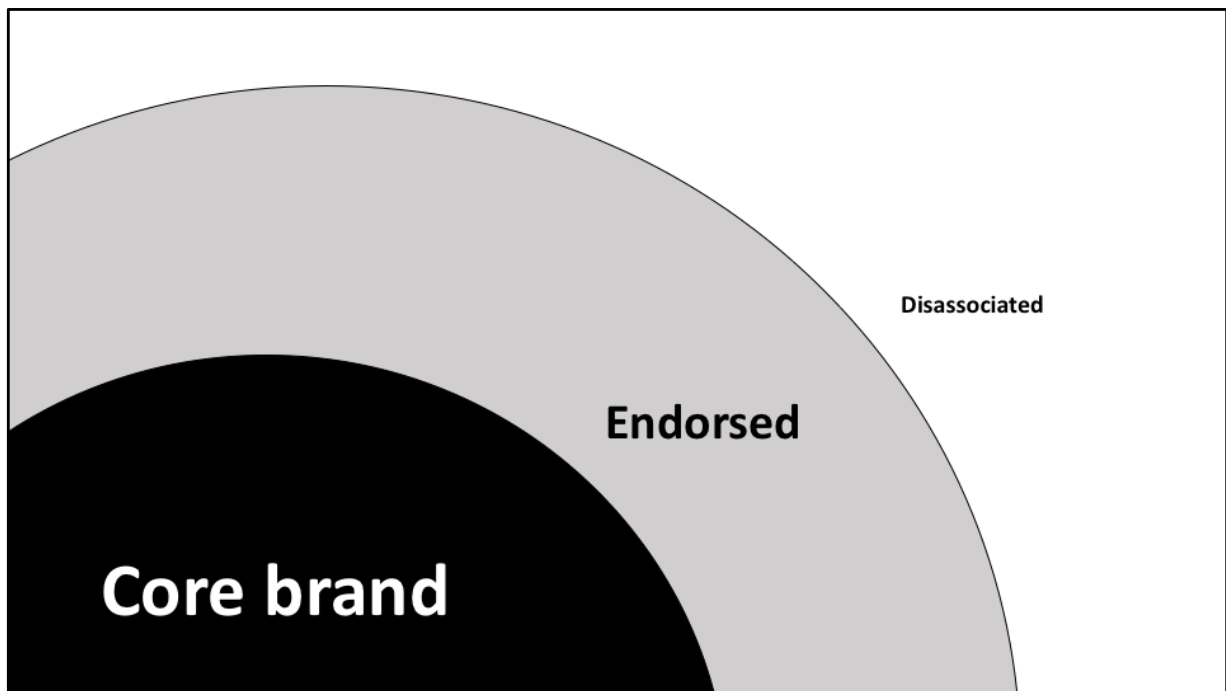
Our current brand landscape is fractured, with many disassociated brands competing for attention. This image is an attempt to place some existing brand elements in terms of their proximity to EMBL. The two core brands are EMBL and EMBL-EBI; the relationship between these two entities is not always clear. On the outside ring are non-EMBL brands that EMBL is related to; on the ring inside this are brands from within EMBL that are looking for differentiation.

We could have filled this slide many times over!

I think there are several things we can take from this image:

- 1) There is a tension between a centralised 'corporate' brand which is steered by a drive for consistency, and brands coming from EMBL's community, which are motivated more by differentiation. I think we need to account for these two forces.
- 2) Relationships between EMBL's branded entities are unclear.

What can we do about this?



There are different types of brands, and the type that EMBL chooses to be will affect almost all levels of its communications. Broadly, there are two types of brands:

- 1) Master brands (e.g. Porsche: very strictly controlled)
- 2) Umbrella, or disassociate brands (e.g. Unilever: sub brands are stronger).

The effect of EMBL choosing one or the other exclusively would be very different. We recognise that there are instances where both ends of the brand spectrum need to be expressed for different entities.

We want to move to a situation where the relationships between brand types is clearly mapped and that brandable elements of the organisation (not structural elements, note) have clear rules for where they lie on a simple brand map, which could be like this one.

If we start at the core, we would like to establish what it means for an entity (group, product, or event, for instance) to lie within that, and to establish rules and guidelines for this.

Being within the endorsed layer, we would relax these guidelines somewhat and allow room for differentiation, and cohabitation with other brands.

Being at the disassociated layer we might just have a hint of EMBL to it.

For example, services are part of the core mission of the organisation but currently they exist at the outer 'disassociated' layer of our brand map. The net effect of this is that many users of these services will be unaware that they are supported by EMBL (perhaps what EMBL is), and will not know the full breadth of services on offer by EMBL.

## Web projects

- Intranet
- Public website
- Services to the scientific community
- Web framework

We see the web projects we are working on falling into these four areas.

## Approach to digital projects

- Collaborative, consultative
- Evidence based
- Long term
- Iterative (6 sprints per year)



## Digital design and development - timeline

- 2018 templates for EMBL microsites
- 2019 intranet for EMBL
- 2019 public website for EMBL: [embl.org](https://embl.org)

## Services to support design and development

- Ongoing tender:
  - Fixed delivery for corporate design (style guide, pattern library, assets...)
  - Ongoing design and dev. for web projects
- Consultation ongoing
- To be brought to advisory committee

## Project governance

- Propose establishing a Committee to guide the work of Strategy and Communications
- Typically to meet 3 times per year
- Takes key decisions
- Ensures input across the organisation
- 10 members
- Kickoff meeting in June?

## Project governance - representation

- Administration
- Advancement
- EICAT
- EMBL research community
- EMBL scientific services
- EMBLEM
- International relations
- IT
- Barcelona
- Grenoble
- Hamburg
- Heidelberg
- Hinxton
- Monterotondo

## EMBL Strategy and Communications

Learn about the work of EMBL's Strategy and Communications team

### Call for volunteer digital diarists



Dan Noyes

25th April 2017

intranet, user research

[Leave a comment](#)

We are looking for EMBL people to help with our intranet user research. By keeping a digital diary you can help us to better understand how you use digital resources in the course of your work and home life. This will help us to design things that work better for you. We are asking for this help with a view to developing a new EMBL-wide intranet over the coming years.

[Download the digital diary form \(PDF\)](#)

<https://blogs.embl.org/communications/>

To learn about our work, our progress, failures, thought processes. We need your input, support and criticism.