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COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN MANUAL

WEBSITES

For most projects and programmes, your website will be the first entry point for the majority of your stakeholders looking for information about your activities. Setting up a website or adding web pages to an existing site is also a relatively easy way to communicate your activities and news. A simple site, using off-the-shelf software, may be sufficient for most projects.

On your website, you should provide news updates on your activities, upload photos and share other content your users might find interesting. There are however a few tips and tricks you need to remember when writing for your website.

A header you can choose to use, a simple example of a wireframe – a basic layout or the skeletal framework of your website – and a template for writing for web are provided in part 2 of this manual.

WRITING FOR WEB

Web writing is different from writing for print or internal (organisational) writing. Most people scan web pages instead of reading every word, and reading on screen is slower than reading a printed page. And the more familiar people are with the internet, the better they are at filtering out uninteresting content. So you need to get to the point faster – present relevant information earlier and more simply.

CHECKLIST FOR WEB WRITING

- ☐ **Shorter is better:** keep web pages to half the length of a paper equivalent.

- ☐ **Concise information:** short paragraphs with ideally one idea in each.

- ☐ **Break up information:** use meaningful sub-headings for long pages and break up your texts with bullet points.

- ☐ **Be credible:** objective content is better than hyped marketing language.

- ☐ **Active voice:** use actionable language not the passive voice.

- ☐ **Tenses:** where possible write in the present tense to reduce the need for updating.

- ☐ **PDFs:** use converted downloads for info that dates quickly or is very detailed.

- ☐ **Write to be found:** for search engines to find you, use strong key words in titles.

- ☐ **Fonts and format:** avoid clever formatting, colours, capitals, underlines, or italic.

- ☐ **Links:** hyperlink keywords (not 'click here') in the text and 'more info' section.

- ☐ **Be logical:** try to think like your users and what they need.

- ☐ **Be accurate:** always check your work for mistakes and do not rely too much on the spell-check function of your software.

TIPS FOR WEBSITES

› Setting up Google Analytics for your page (it is free) gives you valuable information about your website users. You can see who visited your site, how long they stayed on individual pages, what link they followed to reach you, and more.

› If you set up web pages on an existing site about your project, make sure you place a visibly and easily accessible link or banner on the front page of the website so that people find your project information.

› Make sure you add a link to the website of the EEA Grants and/or Norway Grants: **www.eeagrants.org / www.norwaygrants.org.**

› Remember to notify your programme operator and national Focal Point about your website or web page address.

› Check that your website domain name (the URL address) is not already taken. It should be unique, so that search engines can distinguish it, but also easy to type/remember.

› There are many online platforms and solutions for creating simple websites and advice on how to fill the pages with content.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube, are free and easy-to-use tools to communicate directly with your target audiences and provide a great platform for you to share photos, updates and anecdotes about your project or programme. Using social media also enables you to share information with people who are not regular visitors to your website.

Using social media provides a valuable 'multiplier effect'. By sharing information, such as news about an open call for project proposals or an upcoming event you are hosting, you enable people who find it interesting to share the news with other people again. For example, when people become fans of a Facebook page, 'like' or comment on a post on the page's wall, this is shared with their networks on Facebook.

Social media can also be a way of getting people to visit your website if you share a link to a news item you have published. Sharing content from your website on social media also increases your search engine ranking through in-bound links (other websites referring to yours).

You can also enable people to share content they read on your website by setting up social media tools on your site using, for example, Addtoany's ready-made tool. Icons of popular social media appear under a web article/page so visitors can 'bookmark/share/save' the content.

WEBSITE

There are many simple solutions for creating a website or you can use professional help. It is important to register a domain name and find a web-hosting provider for your site. Remember to keep the website simple and the important information easily accessible. Avoid Flash introductions and slow-moving graphics as they can annoy visitors to your site.

Use standard fonts such as Arial, Verdana and Times New Roman for ease of use.

WEB WIREFRAME

This is a generic web wireframe – page schematic or screen blueprint – that represents the skeletal framework of a website and gives you a visual guide before creating all the pages and content. It was produced using the internet tools iPlotz.

your website

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Website/project/organisation

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News and more activities

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Highlights & events

27 - 30 May 2011
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More highlights

In partnership with

insert partner logos, including EEA-Norway Grants

About this site
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Last update: 23 May 2011

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