

# Communications Strategy

**Delivered by Louise Heatley**

**Alice Public Relations**

**Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023**



# Introducing Alice









**At Alice, we make Ireland – and the world – a better place by delivering communications campaigns and capacity-building programmes focused on equality and social justice.**

**Our clients include charities and advocacy groups campaigning on important societal issues; public-sector bodies; membership associations; social enterprises; research and innovation organisations; and cultural festivals and major public events.**



**HEA** | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS



**An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail**  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development



**etbi**  
Education and Training  
Boards Ireland  
*Boird Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Éireann*

**SOLAS**  
learning works

community  
finance  
IRELAND

**DIAS**

Institiúid Ard-Léinn | Dublin Institute for  
Bhaile Átha Cliath | Advanced Studies



**family resource centre  
national forum**

**IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



**WorkEqual**  
empowering progress



**LGBT  
IRELAND** | For Inclusion  
For Equality  
For Everyone

STRONGER TOGETHER  
**CONGRESS**  
Irish Congress of Trade Unions



**Immigrant  
Council of  
Ireland**

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**MARINO**  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

An Associated College of  
Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

**DUBLIN  
CITY COUNCIL  
CULTURE  
COMPANY**



An tÚdarás Rialála  
Seirbhísí Dlí  
Legal Services  
Regulatory Authority

# Today's Session

- PPN 2023 Campaign Recap
- Campaign Resources for PPN's
- Communications Planning
- Social Media Tips
- Media Relations Tips
- Q&A

# National Logos



# Local logos



# PPN websites

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Public Participation Network Carlow. At the top, there is a purple header with contact information: phone number 059 9172495, another phone number 087 2760139, an email address carlowppn@carlowcc.ie, and a REGISTER button. Below this is the organization's logo, a tree icon, and the text "Public Participation Network Carlow". A navigation menu includes Home, About, Membership, Community Representation, Community Resources, Gallery, and Contact. A large purple banner features a quote: "What affects everyone can best be solved by everyone - Anonymous". Below the banner are three content boxes: "Ukraine Humanitarian Support" with a yellow "READ MORE" button, "Public Consultations" with a dark green "READ MORE" button, and "Bagenalstown Improvement Group" with a blue "READ MORE" button. A "Latest News" section is partially visible, showing a purple box for the "CARLOW ARTS FESTIVAL Programme".

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Public Participation Network Cavan. It features a green header with the organization's logo, a search bar, and a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT, NEWS & EVENTS, RESOURCES, REPORTS, PROJECTS, and CONTACT. The main content area is a large image of a river with a person fishing, overlaid with the text: "THE NETWORK FOR COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY, SOCIAL INCLUSION & ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN COUNTY CAVAN". At the bottom of the image, there are two buttons: "Get Involved" and "Get in Touch!".



# Campaign included:

- Branding
- Advertising & Promotion – Radio, Digital, Social Media.
- Website & Video.
- Media Relations – National & Regional.
- Training – Media Relations, Digital Media & Comms Strategy, Media Spokesperson.
- Communications Toolkit & Resources.

Over 16,500 page views of the new PPN landing pages

Over 50,000 views of the new video

Over 600 new community groups registered during the campaign – the equivalent of adding another county!





**Public  
Participation  
Networks**  
Ireland

# Campaign Creative



**Public Participation  
Networks Ireland**



**Public  
Participation  
Networks  
Ireland**

Find out more at [gov.ie/PPN](http://gov.ie/PPN)



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland




**Public  
Participation  
Networks  
Ireland**

**Local issues,  
local knowledge,  
local solutions**

Find out more at [gov.ie/PPN](http://gov.ie/PPN)




Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



**Public  
Participation  
Networks  
Ireland**

**Public Participation  
Networks Building a  
better future**

Find out more at [gov.ie/PPN](http://gov.ie/PPN)



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



# Communications Best Practice Guide and Toolkit for PPNs

- A downloadable and printable communications guide and resources toolkit, showcasing examples of best practice has been created for all 31 PPNs. The guide will support the people and groups who are part of each PPN, as well as PPN workers, to deliver communications in a consistent, impactful and engaging way.
- The resources toolkit includes the new brand assets, brand guidelines, social media graphics, animations, a new video and sample copy for social media posts and stories.
- The toolkit also includes all of the recordings and slides from the three training sessions.

# Communications Planning



# What is Communications?



## Communications & PR can -

- Inspire your existing members & supporters.
- Attract new members & partnerships.
- Raise your profile with key stakeholders.
- Highlight your projects & demonstrate your achievements.



The more people know about your PPN and its over-arching goals, the more likely they will be to join and support you.

Therefore, in all your Communications outputs, you should include over-arching messages about your work; and how / why people can get involved and support you.

Do you have a  
Communications Plan?



# How to create your Communications Plan!

1. Conduct a situation analysis.
2. Set communications objectives: what are you trying to achieve? (Align these to your broader organisational objectives.)
3. Identify and clearly define your target audiences.
4. Agree on your key messages (over-arching and broken down by audience).
5. Identify the tools and tactics you will use to communicate with your target audiences (e.g. press releases, newsletters, social media, advertising / marketing, etc.).
6. Establish a system for monitoring impact and measuring results.

Who are your target audiences?





What are your key  
messages?





## Limited Resources....

### Where to start? Review -

- Branding
- Website
- Social Media
- Printed Collateral
- Media Coverage

# Tactics

- Paid media, e.g. advertising, media partnerships, sponsorships, boosted content on social.
- Earned media, e.g. media relations, stakeholder / community endorsements, word-of-mouth.
- Shared media, e.g. social media interactions, user-generated content, reviews.
- Owned media, e.g. your websites, videos, newsletters, etc.

Take a moment and think about your current communications activities.

What works well?

What could be improved?



# Before any communications / PR activities

Ask yourself these questions:

- What are you trying to achieve? Attendees at an event / awareness of the impact of your organisation / political support?
- Who are the key audiences?
- What is the overarching message you are trying to communicate?
- What resources do you have available to you?

# Develop your GAME Plan!

**G – GOALS**

**A – AUDIENCE**

**M – MESSAGES**

**E – ENGAGEMENT**



What are your main communications challenges & discuss ideas for over-coming them?

Challenges:

# Time?

To draft content, to capture images video etc., to post content. Not a dedicated role in your organisation?

# Budget?

For professional services like photography, advertising, web design?

# Knowledge gap?

Digital marketing, social media, photography?

**Alice**

# Social Media Tips!



## Irish social media landscape

- 3.95 million social media users
- Equivalent to 79% of the population
- Usership by platform:
  - **Facebook:** 2.5 million
  - **Instagram:** 2.4 million
  - **TikTok:** 1.88 million
  - **LinkedIn:** 2.5 million
  - **Twitter:** 1.35 million

## Which platform is most relevant to your audiences?

- What platforms is your PPN using? Is your audience on this platform (demographics, age group, interests)?
- Do you have the resources you need to post across each of the platform?
- How much time can you give to posting?
- What does your audience use social media for?
- What are you trying to achieve? Are you trying to build awareness? Develop a relationship with service users? Reach or target more service users?

## Further Questions to answer:

- How do you measure success currently?
- Who are you following on social media?
- Do you plan or prepare content in advance or post on the fly?
- Is the information on your accounts up to date?
- What baseline are you starting from?
  - Audience size
  - Engagement
  - Website traffic
  - New visitors?



# Structure of a Post

Use an image or video

Informative

Personality

Always proof-read your post first!!

Include a call to action

## TAKEAWAY TASK:

Review your last 3-5 posts on Facebook.

Did you tick all of these boxes?





## Facebook Groups

More than 1.4 billion people are using Facebook Groups every month

26% of Facebook Group users' primary group is around a hobby or activity

Groups are a place to communicate about shared interests with like-minded people. You can create a group for anything — local history, your book club, etc.

You can adjust the privacy settings to make sure only suitable and relevant people are part of the group.

## Facebook Stories

Stories appear at the top of your news feed.

Stories are images or videos that only last for 24 hours.

They are full screen and short form. Photos play for 5 seconds and videos up to 20 seconds.

Stories are an opportunity to show the unfiltered, unposed, authentic side of your PPN.



## WorkEqual services testimonial: 'I was made to feel so welcome and valued in every interaction.'



Here at Work Equal, we help women enter or [return to the workplace](#). We know it can be tough to find a new job or return to work. Perhaps you want to change careers and do something different, or maybe you took time out of the paid workforce to care for loved ones. WorkEqual is here to assist you with your job search. Our mentorship, styling consultations, career coaching and CV support services can give you the confidence to succeed.

### Philippa's story:

Philippa recently availed of WorkEqual's career coaching, mentoring, and CV support services. Here, she shares her experience:

WorkEqual has been an invaluable source of support to me and I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunities that have

**WorkEqual**  
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Thinking of returning to the workforce in 2023?  
We can help you achieve this! We often assist women in gaining employment after taking a career break for a number of years, so please don't be shy about reaching out!

If you want to know more, you can read about our client Philippa's positive experience with securing a job after taking a career break here: <https://workequal.ie/workequal-services-testimonial-i-.../> ... See more

"I'm really excited to be re-entering the workplace and WorkEqual has played a significant part in this journey. It's such a fantastic resource; professional, supportive and friendly, and I cannot recommend it highly enough."  
- Philippa

**WorkEqual**  
empowering progress

WORKEQUALIE  
WorkEqual - Working for a society that champions workplace equality and fair remuneration. [Learn more](#)

# Instagram - Key Features

Instagram is...

- a mobile-based app, so assume majority of users are viewing content via mobile device.
- Visually-led. All posts require an image or video.
- Powered by a data-driven algorithm which is always learning about users' behaviour. It aims to show users more of what they like and engage with.
- Primarily designed to keep user in the app, rather than directing traffic outward to other platforms or websites.
- Geared towards ENGAGEMENT and AUDIENCE GROWTH.
- ADVERTISING plays an ever-increasingly role on Instagram.





ballynahinchcastle

Message Follow

1,487 posts 22.5K followers 357 following

**Ballynahinch Castle Hotel**

Luxury castle hotel in Connemara on Ireland's west coast on a 700 acre estate. A proud member of @relaischateaux info@ballynahinch-castle.com

[www.ballynahinch-castle.com/en/ballynahinch-picnic](http://www.ballynahinch-castle.com/en/ballynahinch-picnic)

Followed by annadaly, weareobeo, din\_taylor + 22 more



Media



GARDEN C...



WALLED G...



VIEWS



DINING



WINDOW



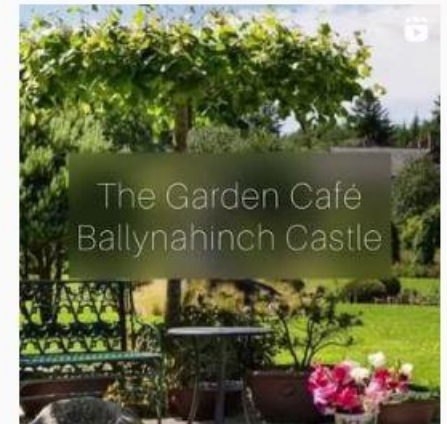
CONNEMA...

POSTS

GUIDES

REELS

TAGGED



# Tools and Tactics

## What do you have already that you can use?

- Impactful research findings
- Human interest stories
- A supportive network
- A powerful spokesperson
- Well known advocates or champions
- Subject matter experts
- Testimonials and case studies
- A strong brand
- FAQs
- Media coverage
- Skills within your wider team (An eye for design? The gift of the gab? A way with words?)
- Existing photography, video, audio
- Budget to get more?



# What tactics can you employ?

**Create Evergreen Content** – versatile, on brand posts which can be rolled out at any time alongside a wide range of messages.

**Storytelling & Retelling & Retelling** - one case study can create a number of blogs, video clips, audio clips, graphic quotes.

**Influencer Engagement** – engage with and tag relevant influencers or partners to encourage their buy in.

**Jump on the Bandwagon** – join conversations or get creative with new trends, *for example, 'Where it started / How it's going'*.

**Create Regular Features** – develop banks of content that delivers key messaging regularly, *for example, a 'Meet the Team' post*

**Create Shareable / Taggable Content** – encourage your most engaged audiences to tag share your post, *for example, an 'I nominate' easy awareness raiser*

# Media Relations Tips!



# What are the media looking for?

New information: facts, figures, research findings, impact stats...

Information they cannot get anywhere else.

A different / exclusive angle.

Direct quotes or opinions.

Feature / human-interest stories / case studies.

A good photo opportunity or TV footage (including “packages” for radio or TV).

Relevant, tailored and succinct information.

# What makes something newsworthy?

**Impact:** will the issue impact on people? Will people feel it matters to them? Who and how many people will be impacted?

**Immediacy / timeliness:** national media won't cover something that happened in the past; it becomes 'old news' very quickly.

**Authority and expertise:** Are you providing information they can't get anywhere else – and in an authoritative way?

**Uniqueness:** is there something new, odd or surprising involved? The media want new information: facts, figures, research findings, impact stats...



# All island growth supported by business loan tastes like success for Belfast food producer Tom & Ollie

By Love Belfast January 20, 2022

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Facebook Twitter Pinterest WhatsApp LinkedIn



## THE GLOSS

IFESTYLE & TRAVEL THE GLOSS BEST SHOPS THE GLOSS X GOODBODY INVESTMENT CLUB FOOD & WINE CULTURE & BOOKS THE G  
events can be booked at [redlinebookfestival.ie](https://redlinebookfestival.ie).



**AND ...** In need of a pick-me-up or want to send someone a gift box to pamper, protect or repair? Consider those by Oxmantown Skincare, an ethical and cruelty-free range, founded by Amy Cahill, and initially launched from her kitchen table in Stoneybatter. Cahill has a background in beauty therapy and aromatherapy, and her botanical products have been awarded the LEO Best Product Award at Showcase Ireland 2020. “Our new range of gift boxes has something for everyone – from mothers-to-be or men who’ve used the lockdown to cultivate their facial hair,” says Cahill. “The Hydration Heroes Facial Kit, the Perfume Discovery Giftbox, or the Citrus Hand Care Kit will provide the perfect treat to gift to loved ones, or keep for

## Build up your media contacts

Monitor the media for coverage of similar topics / organisations.

Get to know all your relevant media: broadcast, print and online:

Take advantage of Ireland's extensive local media landscape.  
Sectoral media: social affairs / health / farming / education / young people...

Try to meet relevant journalists / editors, where possible:

If you're offered a broadcast interview, visit the studio when possible.  
Attend events that your target media attend.





## So the basic formula is...

Identify news angles / agree key media messages.

Develop a creative photocall concept and commission an accredited press photographer (if feasible!).

Issue advance notification to target journalists, including photo desks.

Do a media ring-around and / or undertake media pitches.

Develop a detailed press release for issue on the day of the event.

Hold a photocall / re-use a high-res image for sending to media.

Follow up with target media.



Say what you're for!

**Alice**

Thank you!

**Alice**



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