



Science communication: opportunities & support

Els Grieten – Eline Van Meervenne

Eva Van Doren – Marianne De Voecht

‘I have no time’

‘I risk disapproval of colleagues, of the scientific community because I simplify scientific research and results’

‘My topic is way too complicated’

‘Where should I start?’



Scicom – why?

- **UNESCO World Press Freedom Day 2025**
 - OECD: information integrity = basis for trust in democracies
 - Amnesty International: disinformation undermines fundamental human rights
- **Wetenschapsbarometer 2024 (Science Barometer in Flanders)**
 - 66% is interested in science
 - 79% trust science
 - 53% trusts scientists

A photograph of a panel discussion taking place on a stage in a large, historic hall with stone pillars. Four people are seated on the stage, facing an audience. Behind them are three vertical banners. The leftmost banner is red and white with the text 'Wetenschap voor iedereen'. The middle banner shows a black and white photo of a person. The rightmost banner features a portrait of a woman and the text 'FREE TO ASK UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS'. An audience of diverse people is seated in rows of chairs, facing the stage. A person is seated at a desk on the far left of the stage.

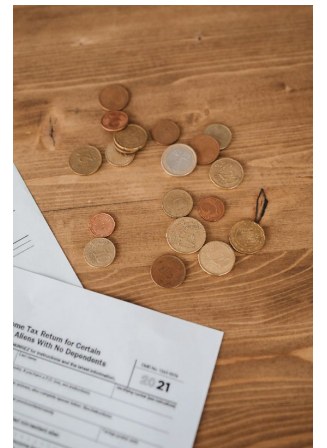
“Science communication will only become more important. And we must continue to do it, no matter how much time it takes. The spreaders of fake news are very well organised, and eventually people will start to doubt everything. Scientists must continue to fight against this.”

Erika Vlieghe | 25 January 2026
De Vooruitblik - Universiteit van Vlaanderen



You have impact

- Communicate your research outside of the academic world
- Testify about the process of scientific research
- Restore or reaffirm faith in science and counter fake news
- Share your passion
- Enthuse children and young people
- Be a role model



Communicate to a general audience





Reputation and impact

- Visibility and credibility
- Career opportunities
- Collaboration
- Funding
- Impact on policy



Not only for you, but for the entire university!

- SciComm = content (article, video, speech, ...)
 - Content = currency (pay with attention)
 - Lot of competition!
-
- ⇒ Surf on existing reputation of the university
 - ⇒ Everyone helps strengthening that reputation
 - ⇒ Teamwork: **everyone benefits**

We are looking for you

... and so are others



Dag van de Wetenschap

> 4 000 visitors





Proefkot STEM olympiade Red Robotegem





ScienceVille | DOCVILLE

PRESS>SPEAK





- **Lectures**
or

Game
Escape room
Podcast
Video
Book
Blog
Exposition
Comic

...

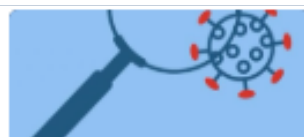




People love science!

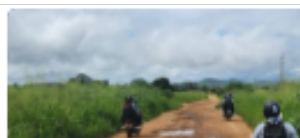
- Pint of Science
- Soapbox science
- Wetenschapsbattle
- PhdCup
- Universiteit van Vlaanderen
- ikhebeenvraag.be
- Nerdland festival
- Flanders Technology & Innovation





Infectieradar

Breng mee de verspreiding van infectieziekten in kaart



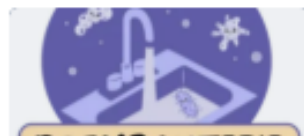
From Lab to Life and Back

Bruggen bouwen tussen burger, wetenschap en beleid voor veilige watertoegang en klimaatadaptatie



TaxAdmin.AI

In kaart brengen van AI bij belastingdiensten in de EU



POEMBAKterie

Benieuwd naar wat er in jouw gootsteen (poembak) zit?



BUGS: Benefits of Urban Green Spaces

Onderzoek naar de gezondheidsvoordelen van stedelijke groene ruimten en hun microben



DigHiMapper

Analyseer kaarten en help onderzoek naar vroegere landschappen



Straatvinken

Straatvinken is een jaarlijks telmoment om na te gaan hoe gezond het verkeer in straten is.



SOS Antwerpen

Waar gingen Antwerpenaren aan dood? Sociale ongelijkheid in Sterfte (1820-1946)



Isala

200 vrouwen kunnen wetenschappers helpen het vrouwelijk microbiom in kaart te brengen

CITIZEN SCIENCE



ScienceUs event | 17 Feb: Citizen Science in action

Virtual event on Recruiting, Motivating & Sustaining Volunteers in Citizen Science

Tine Rams 5 uur geleden



Pitch your research for a science documentary

Do you want a chance to make your research shine in a high-quality scientific documentary?

Tine Rams 6 januari



Workshop: Starting with Citizen Science

Do you want to use citizen science in your research but don't know how to start? Join the workshop!

Tine Rams 18 december 2025



Call for contributions on 'data' in Citizen Science

EADI and the Institute of Development Policy (IoB) of the University of Antwerp are looking for contributions on 'data' in Citizen Science.

Tine Rams 3 december 2025



Press

- Journalists looking for experts every day
- High visibility
- English is okay!

**We support you
and your SciCom ideas**

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION TEAM

Platforms | Help & support

A solid red rounded square containing the text "We organise".

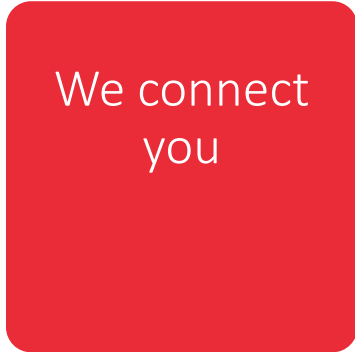
We organise

you join our events

A solid red rounded square containing the text "You imagine".

You imagine

we support your ideas

A solid red rounded square containing the text "We connect you".

We connect
you

**to partners, audiences,
channels and scicom partners**

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION TEAM

Education | Inspiration



COMMUNICATING SCIENCE TO THE PUBLIC: A CHECKLIST	Do you know who your audience is?
Have you identified the key messages to deliver, and kept the focus on them?	Are you using a simple explanation and short sentences?
Are you framing the message so that it sparks curiosity and is compelling to the public?	Are you telling stories, or just delivering facts or numbers?
Have you strategically planned ways to open a dialogue and interact with your audience? Are you carefully thinking about how to keep your delivery or writing lively and monitoring the public's reaction?	
Have you set out strategies to deal with scepticism or distrust?	Have you practiced your communication with non-experts?



Science starts with a story



Whether through film, citizen science, LinkedIn or live presenting, there are many ways to connect. Let's keep sharing your research.

photo: PRESS>SPEAK alumna Livia De Picker wins the EOS PowerAward

A perspective on participatory research

The best participatory research projects started with talking to people and not with GANIT charts (Nina Revijs) is an illuminating quote we'll remember. Just to say that our inspiration day 'Creating Knowledge Together' last week was a success. It highlighted the power and complexity of participatory research, from citizen science to co-creation and action research.



DETERMINE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Social media are immediate and all about dialogue!

Join existing convos and respond to comments

Think first about your **purpose**: what do you want to achieve?

Determine your **'stakeholders'** (= your audience) as clearly as possible

Determine your **'umfeld'**: others who are involved in your topic

Consider your visual identity (profile picture, banner, ...)

Social media change FAST.

Evaluate continuously: what works & what doesn't? What is your impact?

Try to keep up with the latest changes to the algorithm

You don't need to be active on every platform at once. In determining your platform of choice, think about:

- **Content**: what do you want to talk about? What are your themes?
- **Types of activity**: do you want to write (short or long) texts, post videos, make photos, ...?
- **Personal preference**: what are your beliefs? What makes you happy?

Have a strategy for dealing with negative feedback or 'trolls': not everyone will welcome your content

Be aware: social media can be a time drain!



Dept. of Marketing & Communication support

- Press and media contacts
- Press releases
- Social media strategy
- Visibility on our own channels, e.g. online and offline magazine, socials, ...
- Help with branding and visual representation

! Big reach with UAntwerp channels



UAntwerp's online and offline magazine

- Articles and videos
- Wide reach
 - Instagram 20k
 - LinkedIn 130k
 - Mailing 60k
 - Physical magazine 4k



One brand day

- Save the date: **27th of October 2026**
- How can connecting your communication to UAntwerp benefit your visibility and reputation, and that of your research?
- How can we build a powerful reputation for the university together, and all benefit from that?

WHERE TO FIND US

Pintra - team sites:

- [RIVA](#)
- [Team Science communication](#)
- [Department Marketing & Communications](#)

SPOC of your faculty

Pintra subsite for courses
communication about
research / *In progress*



The Incredible Art of Making Science Public

Let's talk science!



**1. Know yourself!
(And your medium and
audience...)**

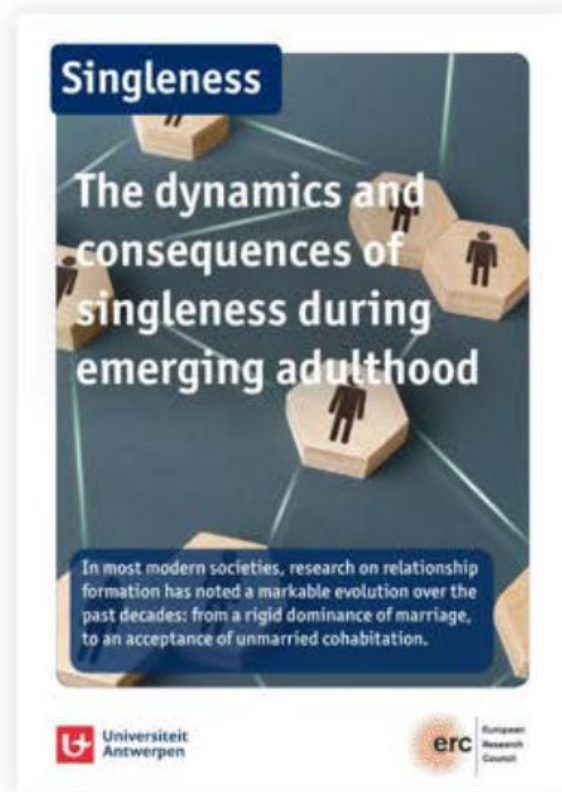
2. KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid!)



Wide audience



3. Visualize





4. Choose your timing wisely

Time to practice!



Elevator pitch

Present your research in 3 sentences or 1 minute

Keep in mind: KISS. Find your hook!

How to find us?

Els Grieten

Science communication team

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