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# Communication plan and infrastructure

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## Abstract

This document describes the planned communication and dissemination actions of the ATLAS project and the means for creating a brand name that resonates in the various applicable sectors, both within and outside the project consortium and the research field in general.

As a project focused on education and training towards a research career in medical robotics, with fifteen ESRs that will advance the state of the art in endoluminal surgery, ATLAS will have access to an extensive and appealing body of knowledge and results produced within and by the consortium. As ATLAS will make a step forward in endoluminal robotics surgery, it is important to inspire and share research results and hands-on experiences within the ATLAS team itself, but also towards the wider public not part of the consortium. Here, medical staff, patients, the research community and the public in general could be targeted. This broader dissemination will help accelerate the progress and developments in this field. ATLAS should be visible both to the scientific community and to the public in general, to send the message to the society that the research from EU funding provides a return to the society by means of the advances on research and by show-casing practical and appealing results. Communication in the surgical field is especially relevant, given that people are quite sensible to health issues and to the efforts in assuring an adequate quality of life.

The purpose of this report is to shed a light on how we plan to communicate all these scientific and technological advances towards the broad surgical field, and in particular how to communicate ATLAS research and progress in autonomous intraluminal surgery.

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## List of Acronyms

<b>ESR</b>	Early Stage Researcher
<b>NTA</b>	Network-wide Training Activities

# 1 ATLAS brand

For achieving an efficient communication, we count on adequate material and infrastructure that facilitates the interpretation of the core messages we wish to convey, the objectives of the ATLAS project and the overall context that are to be transmitted to the different target audiences. In the following the different means and channels for outreach are summarized.

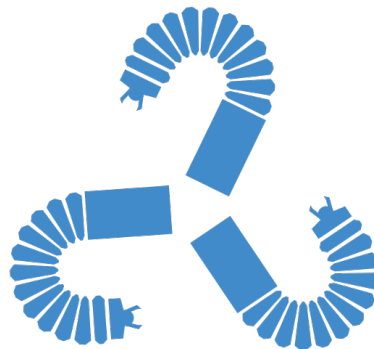
## 1.1 The logo

The logo forms the first identity of ATLAS. The project has developed a logo for its graphical visualization. The logo has been designed aiming to make something visually appealing with flexible instruments, those commonly used in endoluminal exploration or surgery in the lumen. The symbol chosen for the logo is a Triskele, a motif consisting of a triple spiral exhibiting rotational symmetry. The chosen shape, Fig.1.1, is mainly used in Irish-Celtic tradition. It represents motion and in general the cycle of life. Therefore, the logo designed for ATLAS combines some physical elements relevant to the project (flexible endoscopes and a plurality thereof suggesting the control challenges ahead) with health and life, the shape itself, Fig.1.2.

Figure 1.1: An example of triskele.



Figure 1.2: The ATLAS logo.



To provide the formats adequate to each kind of communication material, different formats of the logo have been developed. Furthermore, the triskele sign can appear in a stand-alone fashion or together with the ATLAS abbreviation, as shown in Fig.1.3.

Different versions have been prepared to accommodate to a variety of background colors. E.g. the logo can also be used in the inverse color format, background blue and shape and letters in white, as shown in Fig.1.4, or other colors.

Figure 1.3: Logo with the name.



Figure 1.4: Logo with inverted colors with the name.



## 1.2 Website

The website is a core instrument for the project, both for communication within the project, it serves as a shared working platform for the participants, but also offers a window to the outside. The ATLAS website has been on-line and functional since the start of the project. It has played already a vital and successful role, in presenting the vacancies (15 Early Stage Researchers (ESRs)), the content and conditions of the research projects.

Currently, the contents of the website comprise the following sections:

- **Home.** This section contains basic information and facts. This page includes a brief presentation (About Us), information on the project objectives and a section for announcements. In the first months of the project, the announcement of vacancies has been the main objective of the website. Through this page, the ESR calls were launched and information about the state of the recruitment process was displayed. The home page also links to events organized within the project or promotional actions from ATLAS that take place in external events. New announcements will be continuously updated in the future and appear on this page. All this information will then be accumulated in the section News and Events. The subsection **About Us** lists the beneficiary logos, with the names of the supervisors; the partner organizations, and the people involved. Some parts are still pending upon filling the last ESR positions. The homepage incorporates a Twitter Timeline, that is connected with the Twitter account opened for the project and managed by the project manager.
- **Recruitment.** In these first months of the project, recruitment has been the main objective of the webpage. The section: **We are Hiring**, contains the application procedure and the vacancies.
- **Project description.** This section describes the general project objectives. The details of the different 15 ESRs projects are described on this page. This section explains how the list of PhD projects relate to the set of coordinated work packages.
- **About Us** This section lists the different people and institutes behind the project. Not only the beneficiaries and the ESRs are introduced here, but also the extensive list of partner organizations that are behind the project and support the project through various means including providing technology, know-how, educational and research support, e.g. through offering places from secondments. This section contains a sub section **Contact Us**: a contact form and address of the coordinator's institution.
- **Dissemination.** This section is still pending. It will show the progress and results as they are being produced. The section dissemination has been subdivided into different subsections, namely: Events, publications, documents, and media, which will be adequately kept up-to-date as the project progresses.
- **News** Current and past announcements – in the forms of posts – are listed in these sections. This is expected to become one of the most dynamic sections as the number of events and developments will be updated here. Up to now – and without any ESR contributing so far – 16 events/new items were already announced through this channel.

New information to the website will be added as the project advances. Now we are working to create the links to the social networks that will be established to promote exchange between the ATLAS students and the broader community. The link to social media is explained in more detail in subsection 1.3 described further down in the text.

The website in addition to the webpages described above, also supports **posts**. Posts are announcements (that are automatically reported in the news section), but also other types of more text, as descriptive texts of research, or narrative description of results. Each ESRs have the opportunity to produce posts, that are moderated by the Communication Manager. Posts are then visible in the author personal page inside the ATLAS website.

The website has a counter of visits and statistics which will be used to follow the interest that the project gathers. This information will allow us to react accordingly. The news items on the project will allow users and families to follow the progress as the project advances. It will also allow easier interaction with the researchers. Fig.1.5 shows a snapshot of the ATLAS web home page.

Figure 1.5: ATLAS web page.



### 1.3 Social Media

The project has an account on Twitter. The Twitter account timeline is shown in the website main page. In addition, groups will be used to gather relevant people both in LinkedIn and ResearchGate. Most of the beneficiaries and ESRs manage personal profiles on these social media platforms.

Twitter, being more oriented to companies, is more adequate for communicating project advances and results. It is expected that followers answer and engage in the project progress, based on short messages giving prompt and quick information. LinkedIn, on the other side is the world's largest professional social media network. More formal although still a personal way of communication is supported by this platform. The other professional social media we engage with is ResearchGate, which, by looking at the number of active users, is the largest academic social network. ResearchGate is not only a site for accessing articles (passive users), but also is an excellent environment to stimulate active participation. ATLAS members will be encouraged to share pre-prints of their research results (publications, patents, methods...) in a dedicated ATLAS folder to further give visibility to the work. An ATLAS YouTube-channel will be prepared to share movies of demonstrations and setups built by ATLAS researchers.

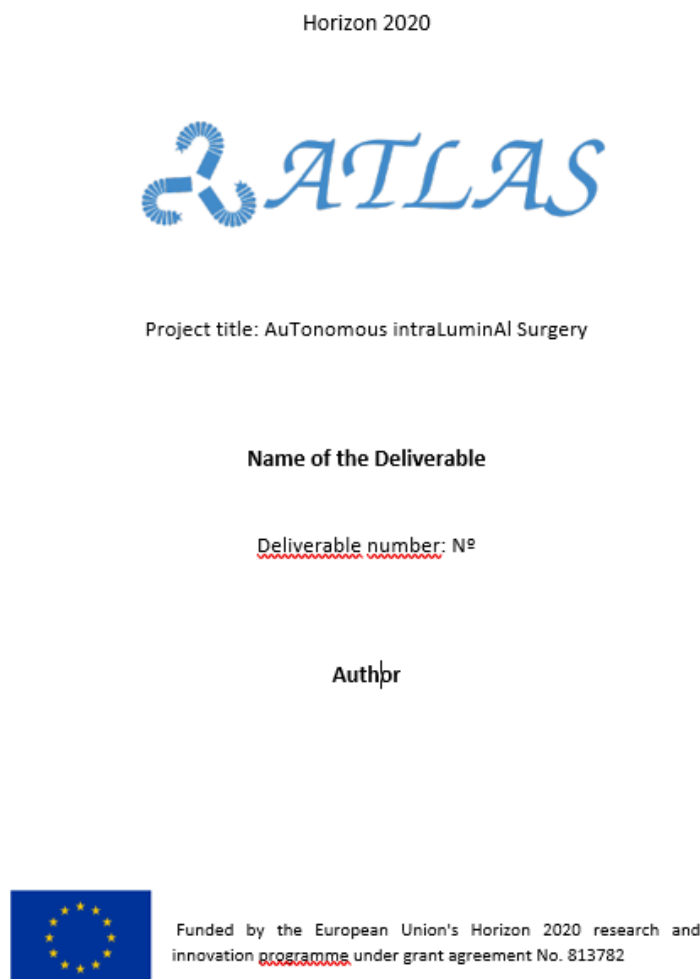
Apart from that, each ESR will have the opportunity (yet no obligation) to create, if they don't have yet, their account on these social nets and be active in them. This could help them to communicate their progress on their research or related

activities and initiatives. It will be possible to reply with hashtags referring to ATLAS events to allow fast and easy spreading of information.

## 1.4 Documentation and presentation templates

For the documentation or dissemination actions the project several templates will be prepared to offer a homogenous way to present information and reinforce the ATLAS brand. Templates are made for preparing deliverables, for presentations in internal meetings or for external dissemination. Fig.1.6 shows, as an example, the template front page for deliverables.

Figure 1.6: Deliverables template.



Other templates will be used for poster and for power point presentations in conferences or meetings, for press releases, and banners for visibility in exhibitions and events.

For the presentation of the project, apart from digital means also some physical paper leaflets will be available as a presentation card of the project to a wider audience. The leaflets will be adapted along the different phases of the project offering up-to-date information adjusted for the targeted audience.



## 1.5 Use of the EU logo

Beneficiaries of the EU's Horizon 2020 research have the obligation to explicitly acknowledge that they received EU funding. This must be done, if possible and unless the Commission/Agency requests otherwise, in all communication, dissemination and IPR activities. The following will be included in all communication and dissemination activities that describe major results obtained from funding by the grant:



**Figure 1.7: Use of the EU logo.**

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 813782 (ATLAS).

High-resolution EU emblems are available here:  
[https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/flag\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/flag_en)

## 1.6 Usage rights

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## 1.7 Acknowledgements

The following lines are to be used by ATLAS participants when acknowledging ATLAS funding.

The ATLAS project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No. 779813 (ATLAS).

The ATLAS project does not receive any external funding for the creation and maintenance of this site from advertisers or from any other association with a specific commercial interest.

## 2 Dissemination Scope

The dissemination scope describes the target audience that is intended. The audience ranges from people active in academia, research, the clinic, to patients and families. Also, representatives from the industry or the general public may be addressed. The way in which audience is approached is to vary accordingly.

### 2.1 Target audiences

#### 2.1.1 Scientific community

In order to obtain a Ph.D. Thesis, one necessarily needs to generate a number of scientific publications. There is a wide set of journals and conferences that may be the targeted by ATLAS. Apart from the big robotics conferences, ICRA and IROS, that always have sessions on surgical robotics also dedicated workshops or medical oriented conferences are relevant: MICCAI, Biorob, Robio, or specifically in surgical robotics: Hamlyn Symposium, CRAS and CARS. Students will be encouraged to publish their work in such specialized journals or conference proceedings. In addition, since MICCAI 2021 will be held in Strasbourg, ATLAS students will be involved in the local organization. Following journals are relevant: The Journal of Medical Robotics Research, the Journal of Robotic Surgery, IEEE Transaction on Medical Robotics and Bionics, the Journal of Medical Devices, apart from other transactions and journals with wider scope such as Transactions on Robotics and Automation, the International Journal of Robotics Research and so on.

Being the core of the project the set of ESRs Ph.D. theses, these students will receive training on open access, proper treatment of medical data and ethic aspects, including best practices to acknowledge financial support or conflicts of interest. The beneficiary institutions have available programs of activities to support these training aspects. ATLAS offers to students Local and Network Training Activities all along the project. Some will be those periodically held by institutions.

To train Ph.D. students to disseminate their work and develop their creativity to communicate and problems solving the universities of the different beneficiaries offer courses and seminars, as well as specific lectures on translational topics. They are trained in problem-solving, as well as in conflict- and failure-management. They get used to acquire information from different sources and synthesize the relevant knowledge, develop leadership and balance teamwork in the management and development of research under the adequate principles of ethics. Emphasis is given to the cultural aspects' characteristic of the scientific thought and to the frame of mind for research and innovation. UPC and UNIVR for instance, periodically launch a Call for attending seminars on open source offered to staff and students, as well as on the access to the main platforms, for the efficient use the different data bases and repositories of research (web of science, Mendeleyev. . .). Other specific sessions on ethics and best practices, Scientific writing, communication and presentation skills, proposals writing etc. Staff, researchers and Ph.D. students can attend these courses, seminars or special session. At SSSA the BioRobotics Ph.D. students normally attend general courses together with other Ph.D. students in Experimental Sciences such as: High Tech entrepreneurship, How to Publish in International Science Journals and Writing scientific articles in English and presenting research at intl. conferences. At Polimi, Ph.D. students are offered plenty of courses, to mention some of them: A Transdisciplinary Perspective on Big Data, Complementary Doctoral Skills, Design Thinking, Ethics in Research, Professional Communication, or Scientific Communication in English. At UNISTRA, the MSII doctoral school offers a wide panel of training courses for doctoral students (scientific courses as well as bibliography usage, IP rights and protection ...). Two courses are mandatory: "Scientific communication and research culture" as well as "ethics in research".

ATLAS will also organize or co-organize events, technical-medical oriented conferences, workshops in conferences, or special sessions. Traditionally many of the ATLAS beneficiaries have been leading or strongly involved in such organizations. CRAS (Computer Robot Assisted Surgery) being one of the conferences lead by ATLAS beneficiaries is initially planned to be held in Barcelona in 2020 organized by UPC. Many other Workshops will be organized in the frame of the more relevant conferences, like ICRA, IROS or more specific like Hamlyn, SMIT or BioRob.

The consortium will joint efforts to program eight Network-wide Training Activities (NTA) which will be held recurrently to facilitate the students' participation, activities that will be open to external participants. These activities will cover from technical aspects to medical basic knowledge, soft skills, hands-on experimentation and tech transfer.

Being open to external participants these training actions will also give project visibility.

The ESRs will also participate in competitions, at the end of the project the best thesis will be encouraged for presentation in awards. The main focus is in the European Georges Giralt Ph.D. award, a yearly competition held since 2001, which awards the best Thesis in Europe. At national level, ESRs will be also able to compete to the respective national awards. Students enrolled at UNISTRA will be able to compete for the "GdR Robotique PhD award", recognizing the best PhD in Robotics in France, awarded by the CNRS. In Spain the group of Robotics of the Spanish Automatic Committee launches annually its own award too. Furthermore, participation of ESRs in other calls at conferences, best paper award or others, as those launched at the own universities will be promoted.

Other challenges as hands on competitions will be additional means to develop hands on experiments and give visibility to the achieved results.

### 2.1.2 Youth and high school

ESRs can easier communicate with younger students, even at high school, by means of social media or by direct contact with them. For this reason, ESRs, as the brute force of the project will be encouraged, not only to use frequently networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, but also participate in the organization of face to face events, such as the 4 integration weeks already foreseen. Taking advantage of the required hands-on experimentation, necessary to prove the thesis results, ESRs will show their hands-on demonstrations in the respective open-houses or roadshows planned and thus, let the youngsters to visualize the research going on in the field and evaluate the results.

### 2.1.3 Patients and family

The engagement of patients and families to the project will be encouraged. They must be informed, and feel well informed, about their role in the research going on, being aware of the project objectives and expected benefits. From a leaflet, explaining origins and how ATLAS contributes to the state of the art, these audience will become familiar with the research and can become more active, interacting with the web or the blog.

### 2.1.4 Clinicians/Health care

Starting with the partner institutions, clinicians, which will be part of the project being involved in the research, as guiders of the definition of the problem to tackle in endovascular surgery, the medical community receiver of the on-going research will expand beyond this community. The coordinated activities with them, short stays of students or joint academic activities will assure this communication.

### 2.1.5 Governance institutions

Along the development of the project some facts may appear that have an incidence on normal operation and might require a specific regulation or adaptation of those existing to assure a better practice of the corresponding procedure. If this happens, a report would have to be done and be addressed to the corresponding authority or government actor.

### 2.1.6 Industry

Industry is an important target as means to exploit the results of the project. The communication to industry will be in the corresponding forums. The annual European Robotics Forum is an excellent event in which ATLAS will participate presenting the progresses along its different research lines. The potential exploitation of the project results will also be a topic for dissemination either publications, patents or media.

### 2.1.7 General public

These wider audience will be reached as much as possible through the press and media in general. The different institutions have some press infrastructure in their facilities which take care of finding ways of presenting the research results of their research groups, the press office. ATLAS will rely on them to propitiate reports, interviews, debates, but also, the researchers have eventually interviews or other chances to participate in debates or speeches addressed to the general public. These will be good occasions to present in a clear way the concepts and objectives of the project, as well as

achievements. The goal is to give a view of the current state of the art in endoluminal surgery and mainly ATLAS results, but also foresee what is expected in the next future. The social impact of this technology is a hope for health, but also a worry in what refers to ethics, safety and privacy that should be clarified and well understood by the public.

As new results are obtained along the execution of the project its participants, beneficiaries, partners and ESRs, will try to communicate to the public. Through the institutions and personal actions, the project will produce Press Releases, the project participants will take part in interviews, debates, in press and in radio and TV programs.

There are some identified events where ATLAS students will be encouraged to participate. In France, UNISTRA takes part in the National Science Fair (Fête de la science in French), with demonstration of robotic setups to the general public. The next ones are in 2020 and 2022, usually in October. The project will also produce promotion material to be delivered in public events as exhibitions.

## 2.2 Communication materials

Considering the different target audiences, the communication material will be diverse. The material that will be produced will be:

- Publications: As obligated material for PhDs the publications in conferences and journals will be the fundamental diffusion means of the ATLAS project results.
- Posters: Posters prepared for presentation in conferences will also serve to visualize the project results in the lab or other contexts. Also, as background for photos or videos.
- Leaflets: Threefold tryptic or simple sheets with presentation, objectives, ESRs and results will be prepared and available at the beginning of the academic course. Leaflets should dynamically be updated and adapted to the audience at every moment, either the scientific, medical or other communities.
- Project Banner: A banner to visualize ATLAS will be exhibited, when possible, at the major medical or robotics forums or conferences. The banner will keep more static information that point the main objectives of ATLAS, the consortium and the funding source.
- Press releases: Specific descriptions of current achievements presented in different phases of the project, taking advantage either of robotics events that motivate the presence of press, or of other occasions in the context of the different beneficiaries' activities and events.
- Videos: A collection of videoclips will illustrate the partial results achieved by the different ESRs. For its dissemination a YouTube channel will be created and linked to the ATLAS webpage.
- Hands on demonstrations: The demonstrators prepared for the evaluation of the research achievements, which will be presented in the potential occasions: open-week, exhibitions, competitions.

### 3 Communication Plan

Communication is a key point as means to give project visibility. Therefore, all ATLAS participants should have their role in disseminating the project research, results, activities or related information, being either scientific, clinical or generic. To guarantee a broad and complete communication all along the project, an adequate plan and a programmed follow-up is necessary.

As described, the communication needs are wide, ranging from scientific publications to broadcast news.

#### 3.1 Web and social media

The web is by itself a communication means already operative in ATLAS. Apart of its intrinsic sections, already described, the web has a specific section for dissemination.

The web will have a section for internal scientific documentation and material sharing. The internal communication will not require a moderator but the communication manager should supervise the adequacy of its use.

For a more agile communication, other social links will be used. Initially a Twitter link will be available, being launched before the starting date of most ESRs in October 2019. Links in the ATLAS web to other social media networks will be also be available as ESRs become active. Initially a “hello” and short presentation of every new ESR to connect with the others. Later on, scientific and technical appealing information will help to spread the name and activity of ATLAS in this media.

ESRs as the core team of the project will be entrusted to be active in communication. Being social media, a powerful communication means, we will foresee a kind of ring-list so that each ESRs should bring an item, as a matter of information, debate, discussion... that assures keeping alive the considered communication channels. Considering a rhythm of a bi-weekly period, each ESRs would start a topic every 30 weeks. The more internal items, scientific and coordination, will be via the Intranet, a site that will maintain the information all along the project and further. And then, extending to social networks the information more addressed to dissemination.

#### 3.2 Local dissemination

Since beneficiaries and partners belong to different countries having different languages, it is responsibility of locals the generation of the required documentation (press releases, news, etc.) in the language or languages of the country. Material in local languages shall be able to have a more proactive actuation in disseminating the achieved objectives and the interest of the project.

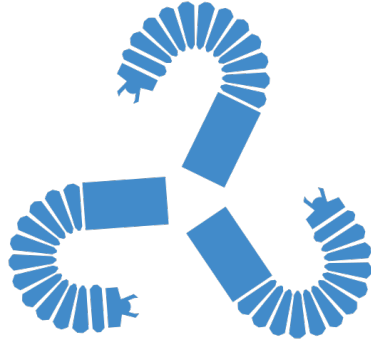
#### 3.3 Dissemination follow-up

The aim of the communication follow-up is twofold, to collect this information and supervise the project productivity in this activity.

At every monthly skype meeting of the consortium a review of the number of publications and main media actions (institutional, press, radio and broad cast), just briefly mentioning them, will help to keep aware of the good health of this activity. This will also help to be aware of the information to be updated in the web, if not done, and in leaflets when updated.

Apart from that, a periodic report will be processed based on the requested information to all participants to oversee the visibility of the project in its wide scope. With this aim, an excel file will be used to collect this information from the project participants every 6 months. In it there will be inputs for the different actions considered: Publications (Journals, Conferences), Events ((workshops, conferences, courses, Summer Schools), dissemination (press, radio, TV) in each case with indication of who is involved, to which audience, and motivation (scientific, events, awards, recognitions, main achievements, dissemination and others).

The project social media will have a moderator to assure that the information is adequate. It is assumed that the information communicated there doesn't need the quick response that currently social media produces.



The ATLAS project

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