

Communication Guidelines:

persons and organisations WITHIN the University

Introduction

*Communications are becoming an increasingly important strategic element for the university, which is called upon to play an active role within the dynamics of social and economic development. The strong impact of research and new technologies, the enhancement of human capital as a key to current challenges and the ability to transfer innovation to the production system, public bodies and the third sector make the Politecnico di Milano a leading player. **Good communications define who we are, reflect our image and convey our values.***

*We are the country's leading technical university, a point of reference in Europe, a university that competes worldwide. **Communicating in a professional manner expresses the awareness of our role and mission, defines good practices and develops virtuous mechanisms.** This responsibility falls upon anyone who, in various capacities, works in the name and on behalf of the Politecnico di Milano.*

*To this end, a **Strategic Communication Plan** has been drawn up, the design and implementation of which define the communication guidelines that help to enhance the University's positioning.*

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1. Guidelines: objectives and general principles

*These communication guidelines aim to structure and coordinate the communications of the Politecnico di Milano in line with its **strategies** in order to consolidate its image and **reputation**, promoting effective and qualified contents supporting the different souls that are part of it. Indeed, every communication contributes to the public's perception of the institution and to the definition of their expectations and opinions.*

In this respect, some **basic principles** should be recalled:

- all internal and external communications involve the University's image. Their impact affects the entire Politecnico di Milano community and not just those who promoted them;
- at an identity level, it is important for the Politecnico di Milano, despite its complex structure, to be perceived as a unitary community, also and especially in communication terms, in which the spirit of belonging should be greater than the desire for autonomy, whilst also recognising the principle of freedom of research and opinion of the University's professors;
- the Politecnico di Milano is an open university that values the uniqueness of all its members. For this reason, in accordance with the policies defined by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI), all the communications of the Politecnico use linguistic forms that respect gender identity and its commitment to using inclusive languages (including iconographic ones).

Equally important is the fact that the University's institutional presence is based on compliance with the **Statute of the Politecnico di Milano** and its **Code of Ethics and Conduct** (available at <https://www.polimi.it/en/the-politecnico/statute-and-regulations>).

2. Using the logo and mentioning the Politecnico di Milano

*The logo represents the **uniqueness** of the institution. It is the **distinctive** feature of the Politecnico di Milano and guarantees its recognition. It is the founding element and symbol of its visual identity. Given its importance, all its uses must be regulated in order to preserve and enhance the image and reputation of the University, in line with its founding values.*

- The affixing of the Politecnico logo must comply with the guidelines indicated by the **Brand Identity Manual** (available at <https://www.polimi.it/en/the-politecnico/communication>). The Manual regulates and protects the consistency and effectiveness of the visual identity and coordinated image of the Politecnico di Milano. It establishes how the logo is to be used in different ways.
- All **requests** for using the logo must be sent to comunicazione@polimi.it, along with all information necessary for their correct evaluation (e.g. occasion and context of use, purpose, any partners involved in the initiative).
- The use of the Politecnico logo, in its institutional form, must be approved by the **Rector**.
- The affixing of the Politecnico logo is **incompatible** with any other logo/symbol characterising a University structure (for example, the logo of a single Department cannot be placed next to the logo of the University, since one excludes the other), given that the logo of each structure already bears the identity of the University itself.

2.1 Institutional activities of the University and its structures

The request to use the logo, to be made by internal structures (Departments, Schools, Campuses, Major Infrastructures, Interdepartmental Laboratories, any other teaching and research structure, Administration Areas and Services), may be **omitted** in the following cases:

- for institutional activities and documents relating to the specific activities of a single structure, to be authorised by its direct Manager. This is the case, in particular, of research activities for Departments; teaching activities for Schools; organisational, service, local interest activities for Campuses and other University structures;

- for research publications or events of University structures held at the Politecnico and/or organised by University structures.

The guidelines indicated by the Brand Identity Manual (available here: <https://www.polimi.it/en/the-politecnico/communication>) are always to be complied with.

The Politecnico di Milano logo may not be placed on any document relating to **personal content or initiatives** attributable only to the author of the document and, in particular, to any document relating to activities carried out externally to the University, even if permitted or authorised. In this case, only the author's personal contact details and, if desired, the following information may be used:

(Prof. Full name, Professor of ... at the Politecnico di Milano).

Student associations may not use the logo though may use the wording "Association accredited by the Politecnico di Milano". Any use of the Politecnico logo solely for communication activities taking place during international competitions and collaborations with external bodies/institutions, is subject to approval by the Rector.

- The corresponding **request** must be sent to comunicazione@polimi.it, enclosing documents relating to the initiative. These are then forwarded to the Rector's office for their evaluation.

2.2 Patronage for initiatives proposed and organised by third parties

Patronage, which should be understood as patronage **for no consideration**, consists in granting the use of the Politecnico di Milano logo, together with the specific wording "*Under the patronage of...*" or alike, to events or initiatives organised by external parties.

Patronage is granted either **by the Rector** or by the **Campus Vice Rectors** for the relevant territorial events, using the wording of the corresponding Campus.

The Rector may also grant patronage for events dealing with shared themes in line with the University's strategic guidelines, whose speakers include its Professors or staff.

- The corresponding **request** must be sent to comunicazione@polimi.it, enclosing documents relating to the initiative. These are then forwarded to the Rector's office for their evaluation.

3. Media relations

*Relations with the press and media outlets are based on **credibility**, trust and **authority**. Every news item must be duly evaluated, understood and disseminated to professionals who, within their editorial teams, convey it for the benefit of the different target audiences. This process calls for the involvement of experienced figures, turning the press office into a fundamental point of reference within the University.*

The Politecnico di Milano promotes the effective management of media relations, ensuring transparency, timeliness and quality in the dissemination of news and information. The Press Office manages media relations by:

- **acquiring information** on institutional, teaching, research activities and on the various initiatives of the University for its communication on proprietary and non-proprietary channels (registered newspapers, newsletters et al.);
- drafting **press releases** on institutional, scientific, educational and cultural initiatives and disseminating them to the local, national and international press;
- organising **press conferences** and specific initiatives on topics relevant to the University;
- relying on the support and engagement of **experts** (Professors, researchers and University staff), designated by the Department Head at the request of the Press Office, for radio, television contributions, articles and interviews;
- responding to **specific requests** from the media on news topics and/or issues of specific interest (collecting information, data and images at the request of the media).

3.1 Disclosure of news to the media

Promotional activities related to the media are evaluated according to the standards of novelty, topicality, clarity, criticality, transmission methods and timing, target audience. The Press Office verifies, together with the corresponding Department Head and/or his representative, the relevance of each proposed fact and/or topic. In order to ensure a

correct working process, University staff are asked to forward any request to relazionimedia@polimi.it in good time.

- In case of **events** (conferences, workshops, visits...) involving the press, the corresponding Department Head and/or his representative is advised to give notice thereof (with not less than five working days, where possible), accompanying his request for support with the agenda, leaflet, brochure and/or a short description of the meeting so that the Press Office can correctly assess its scope and take action accordingly.
- In case of dissemination of **scientific results**, pending publication in relevant media, and/or of the final results of research projects (publicly-funded projects), the corresponding press releases are prepared with the support of the Press Office and distributed with the approval of the scientific representative of the project.

3.2 Management of direct contacts with journalists

If a lecturer/researcher/University expert is contacted directly by the media, **the Press Office should be informed** so that it can offer its support, facilitate interaction with journalists and maximise results.

The Press Office acts not only as an intermediary, but also as a **facilitator for preparing and conducting interviews** (video, written or radio interviews).

Other Campuses independently hold relations with the local press and orientation activities. In order to develop appropriate synergies with local and national newspapers, the Campuses are asked to report any publications to relationsmedia@polimi.it.

3.3 Access to University facilities for TV video interviews and photo shoots

Access of cameramen and journalists (cameras and photojournalists) to university structures is subject to **authorisation**.

- Any **request** from a Department Head and/or Structure Manager and/or his representative must be sent to relationsmedia@polimi.it.

Staff from the Press Office are present during filming/recording/photo shoots, providing support to the crew and the interviewee.

The aforesaid authorisation process applies also to requests from other operators for editorial or advertising content (e.g. documentaries).

3.4 Editorial and advertorial collaborations

Collaboration agreements with **paid publications** are part of advertising activities (B2B2C). They are therefore governed by a special contract between the parties (Department/University Structure – publishing group). If such agreements are of interest to individual departments, the Public Engagement & Communication division is available to verify their soundness, compliance with the University's values, brand awareness and reputation so as to protect the image and existing or pre-existing agreements with national and international media players.

In the case of contributions to **free (and non-scientific) publications**, the professor/expert is asked to notify the Press Office.

All **requests** must be sent to relazionimedia@polimi.it.

4. Events and initiatives

*In-person events are one of the most significant moments of dialogue for the University. An event creates **synergies**, connects people and ideas, opens up spaces for interaction and lays the foundations for new initiatives. Events **position** the University with regard to themes and territories, generate notoriety and contribute to increasing brand reputation. For all these reasons, the organisation of conferences, debates and public meetings remains a central public relations activity and should be managed as such.*

The Public Engagement & Communication Division of the Politecnico di Milano organises ceremonies, institutional and scientific dissemination events, cultural initiatives and

public debates on major topics of interest. It manages the granting of the University's institutional facilities and offers advice on organisational aspects and support for promotional activities for events organised by other University structures.

4.1 Grant of University facilities

The University's facilities may be granted to internal and external structures or entities subject to an assessment of the content of the initiative by the Public Engagement & Communication Division.

- Applications for University facilities are made by filling in the form available at <https://www.polimi.it/campus-e-servizi/spazi-e-aule-studio/richiesta-spazi>, duly substantiated with an essential description of the event indicating the title, date and estimated number of participants. A short abstract and, where possible, the draft copy of the programme should also be attached.

For promotional event banners on buildings, signage and displays of various kinds, the Public Engagement & Communication Division assesses their appropriateness, timing and spaces in accordance with the **Brand Identity Manual** (available at <https://www.polimi.it/en/the-politecnico/communication>).

4.2 Request for organisational or promotional support

University structures can use different services made available by the Public Engagement & Communication Division, as indicated below. These activities are evaluated according to specific quality criteria (as indicated above in point 3.1), compliance with the Communication Plan, as well the methods and timing of transmission as specified below:

- **Consultancy and organisational support.**
The request must be sent in good time (not less than 20 working days) to comunicazione@polimi.it, accompanied by a description of the objective of the event, the partners involved, its draft programme, the available budget and the services requested (media relations, institutional relations, organisational and/or promotional support...).
- **Support for the dissemination of initiatives and events.**
Support for promotional activities takes place through:
 - publication of the event on the **polimi.it website** in the dedicated section;

- inclusion in the **Polimi Events Newsletter** (sent every fortnight);

The request must be received well in advance of the event date at eventi-web@polimi.it.

In case of a request for visibility through the University's social media channels, please refer to the content proposal flow in place with the Communicators Network, which feeds a shared monthly editorial plan (ref. 6.1).

- **Formal request for patronage to external institutions**

The request for patronage to institutions external to the University is made directly by the structure organising the event. If advice from the Public Engagement & Communication Division is deemed useful, the request can be sent to cerimoniale@polimi.it indicating any relevant information.

Where the request comes from Central Administration Areas, the Public Engagement & Communication Division will take care of the procedure, subject to prior submission of the necessary documents within **60 days** before the date of the event.

4.3 Institutional attendance and protocol management

The University is an integral part of the Lombard and national territorial context, contributing significantly to its scientific, technological, social and cultural development, working alongside institutions and maintaining fruitful relations with them. Given the importance of such institutional relations, the Public Engagement & Communication Division supports University structures in the management of the **State protocol**.

Where a structure organising an event intends to invite public authorities and representatives of institutions (at local, national or international level), it must share the invitation with the Public Engagement & Communication Division and agree thereon.

- The **notification**, accompanied by useful information (for example, the purpose and programme of the event, the intended audience, any partners involved) must be sent in good time (not less than 10 working days) to cerimoniale@polimi.it. It is the responsibility of the Public Engagement & Communication Division to handle the request in good time before the initiative and agree with the structure on how to manage the attendance of institutions.

5. Sponsorships, agreements with third parties and paid promotional activities

*The Politecnico di Milano has always been active in collaborations with third parties (companies and public bodies) through **agreements, research projects and collaborations**. These initiatives can generate communications that have a direct impact on the University's image and reputation. Preserving the respectability, prestige and values of the University is essential.*

Collaborations are a key opportunity to enhance strategic activities for the University alongside high-level partners. With this in mind, it is essential to define a common communication strategy that jointly and synergistically amplifies the reputation of the University and its partners, creating value for both.

In this sense, it is considered appropriate to set up a framework for structured communication activities with external partners, based on the type and purpose of the relationship. This framework is an element of innovation and enhancement, for instance as part of relations with companies already overseen by the Research, Innovation and Corporate Relations Division. The Public Engagement & Communication Division therefore works in synergy with its partners to develop strategies, lines of communication and content that are in accordance with their mutual interest and purposes.

5.1 Communication activities as part of research contracts and collaborations

All research, consultancy or collaboration contracts with external partners include an article regulating how the University is to be mentioned. The standard wording is:

- *The Politecnico may not be cited in fields other than the technical-scientific field, and, in any case, never for advertising purposes.*

The Public Engagement & Communication Division is available for discussion in case of doubts in the application of this wording.

- The corresponding **request** must be sent to the e-mail address comunicazione@polimi.it, enclosing documents relating to the initiative (e.g. contract, context of the request). Any communication actions will be planned and developed in agreement with the Public Engagement & Communication Division.

5.2 Communication activities as part of sponsorship contracts

The Politecnico di Milano has defined guidelines designed to enhance access to external funding that can help improve and increase University initiatives and other activities as well as the quality of existing services.

As recalled by the **Guidelines for Sponsorship and Donation Management** (www.normativa.polimi.it/fileadmin/user_upload/regolamenti/linee_guida/NUOVE_LINEE_GUIDA_PER_LA_GESTIONE DELLE SPONSORIZZAZIONI_E DELLE DONAZIONI.pdf), such agreements may provide for a possible joint communication plan between the Politecnico di Milano and a third party, to be previously agreed upon with the Public Engagement & Communication Division.

If such arrangements include communication actions, the draft contract is shared during the parties' negotiations.

- The request must be sent to comunicazione@polimi.it along with the necessary documents for evaluation purposes. The Public Engagement & Communication Division will evaluate and define the possible communication plan in time for conclusion of the agreement.

5.3 Communication activities as part of contracts for the supply of goods and services

Contracts with suppliers of goods and services regulate the use of the Politecnico di Milano name and logo as follows:

The Politecnico di Milano may not be named for advertising or promotional purposes or in commercial documentation and the logo of the Politecnico di Milano may never be used without prior authorisation from the Politecnico di Milano.

In line with the aforementioned contractual article, any requests must be sent, accompanied by the necessary materials for their evaluation, to comunicazione@polimi.it.

5.4 Paid promotional activities

The Public Engagement and Communication Area identifies the most suitable and **effective University initiatives** and actions for the communication of institutional

activities, following the strategic guidelines and defining an integrated communication plan that can include owned, earned and paid media, submitting it to the Rector and the relevant representatives for their consultation and approval.

Owned media means the communication channels managed and controlled by the University (its website, social media pages and newsletters). Earned media means the media “earned” through PR activities (relationships) and mentions on social media. Paid media includes different forms of paid advertising, such as advertisements, sponsorships, social media advertising and pay-per-click ads, which are essential to the effectiveness of the channels of which they are an integral part.

In particular, paid promotional activities, defined within an integrated media plan at the University level, are not only useful, but also necessary in some contexts to reach specific target groups. For this reason, having regard to the evolution of tools and the market, a new approach to communication activities is now called for, which cannot remain tied to an exclusively organic method. Therefore, by way of example, sponsored forms of communication can be implemented through the following digital and non-digital touch points:

- purchase of advertising space on digital and physical newspapers;
- purchase of advertising space in the main local and national billboard circuits;
- purchase of co-branded editorial products;
- promotional campaigns on social media.

If a structure intends to launch paid promotional initiatives, it must first **submit the proposed** media plan to the Public Engagement & Communication Division so that the latter can assess its consistency and alignment with the strategic objectives and actions already planned at University level and approved by the Rector.

In any case, any paid promotional activity is subject to the Code of Public Contracts, Legislative Decree no. 36/2023, just like any other purchase for the Public Administration, through an e-procurement platform and in compliance with the rotation principle.

- The corresponding **request** must be sent to comunicazione@polimi.it reasonably in advance (not less than 20 working days) of the date scheduled for the start of the campaign.

6. Website and digital communications

Communications and the digital world increasingly represent an inseparable combination. The rapid evolution of digital systems, their pervasiveness and ease of use, as well as the ability to penetrate widely mean that the University's website and social media, in particular, are to be managed with extreme care. A professional approach is essential to ensure proper information, prevent its distorted use and fully exploit the potential of these means.

The Public Engagement & Communication Division is a reference point for all University structures. It unambiguously directs all actions aimed at consolidating the Politecnico's brand as well as all opportunities for the development of content to be disseminated through earned media, owned and paid media, ensuring that every message is in line with the University's strategies.

6.1 Content proposals on the University's digital channels

The communication needs of the University's structures on the University's website and its official social media channels are implemented almost daily within the Editorial Plan (*Piano Editoriale* - PED), developed jointly.

For a better management of information flows and in order to increase the level of publication planning, the interaction and synergy between the representatives of University Departments and structures are fundamental. These are part of the **Communicators Network**, which is intended to anticipate and plan publication proposals as an "enlarged editorial team", holding regular meetings coordinated by the Public Engagement & Communication Division.

Content proposals are validated by the Public Engagement & Communication Division according to their quality (as indicated above in point 3.1), consistency with the University's brand identity, transmission methods and timing.

The University's structures promote their activities by following the **Brand Identity Manual** (available at <https://www.polimi.it/en/the-politecnico/communication>) and the related **guidelines**.

6.2 New editorial products on digital channels

Each **new digital communication and/or promotional initiative** as well as each **new**

editorial product (including, but not only, the sending of newsletters, the opening of social media channels, the publication of videos, etc.) is discussed with the Manager or the communicator of the structure so that it can be shared and evaluated with the Public Engagement & Communication Division.

7. Institutional Voice Project

*Communications are increasingly conveyed by the **voice of those representing the University**, those who embody its values, ambitions, growth strategies and vision. This is what the trustworthiness of the University is based on: the people working in an organisation are in fact a valuable point of contact with the outside world. Communicating is one of the unavoidable tasks of good leadership.*

In order to give consistent messages (in substance and form), the Public Engagement & Communication Division works alongside and supports the University's **institutional figures** in their communication activities (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deputy Rectors and Representatives).

These figures are invited to take part in training and refresher activities on communications as proposed by the Public Engagement & Communication Division, to contribute to monitoring actions and, on a spontaneous basis, to employee advocacy projects.

7.1 Social media

Whilst acknowledging the fundamental principle of freedom of research and opinion of University Professors, views and comments that may affect the reputation of the University, even if carried out in a **private capacity**, should be evaluated with extreme care by anyone holding institutional positions. These will be recognised as such, relieving the University of any responsibility (especially if they violate personal dignity or are discriminatory).

7.2 Media requests and participation in events external to the University

Participants are asked to adopt the coordinated image of the University and to communicate to the Public Engagement & Communication Division any media exposure request received thereby, in compliance with their position, by writing to institutionalvoice@polimi.it. This also applies to their participation in events and public

initiatives where directly instructed by the Rector (whose functions are performed thereby on that occasion).

7.3 Requests to the Rector

The Rector is the key representative within the Politecnico community and *vis-à-vis* its stakeholders. To this end, anyone making **editorial requests** (contributions, articles and interviews) or asking for the Rector's **participation in events** (conferences, exhibitions, debates...) is invited to promptly inform the Public Engagement & Communication Division by writing to institutionalvoice@polimi.it.