INNOCORE OPEN SCIENCE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

EELISA Network of OS Ambassadors

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The OS Ambassador Blueprint: A Guide to Effective Recruitment and Active Engagement

Contents

Introduction

The *OS Ambassador Blueprint: A Guide to Effective Recruitment and Active Engagement* has been curated to help the EELISA InnoCORE universities effectively identify, recruit, train, and engage Open Science (OS) Ambassadors.

Open Science represents a new approach to the scientific process, based on cooperative work and new ways of diffusing knowledge by using digital technologies and new collaborative tools. Universities, with their immense knowledge resources and student and faculty talent, are at the helm of this revolution. OS Ambassadors, acting as advocates for this paradigm shift, can foster an atmosphere of open, collaborative, and reproducible research on campus.

This guide is designed to simplify the complex process of establishing a successful OS Ambassador program within a university setting.

Chapter 2, "Identifying Potential OS Ambassadors", gives universities insights into pinpointing potential ambassadors within their student and faculty bodies, those individuals who have the skills and passion to champion Open Science practices.

Chapter 3, "The Recruitment Process", provides a systematic approach for engaging, interviewing, and onboarding these potential ambassadors within a university context.

In Chapter 4, we clarify the "Roles and Responsibilities of an OS Ambassador", offering a clear understanding of what universities should expect from these individuals.

Chapter 5, "Effective Training and Support for OS Ambassadors", outlines how universities can ensure these ambassadors are well-equipped to perform their roles effectively.

Chapter 6, "Strategies for Active Engagement", presents practical methods for universities to ensure long-term involvement and sustained enthusiasm from their OS Ambassadors.

Chapter 7, "Evaluation and Feedback", underscores the importance for universities to regularly assess the performance of their ambassadors and provide them with constructive feedback for improvement.

Chapter 8 wraps up the guide with our "Concluding Remarks", summarizing the key themes and providing additional guidance for universities looking to optimize their OS Ambassador programs and the OS Ambassadors Network across the alliance.

We hope that by adopting the strategies outlined in this blueprint, the consortium can cultivate a network of influential OS Ambassadors, driving forward your Open Science initiatives, and fostering a culture of transparency and collaboration.

2. Identifying Potential OS Ambassadors

The journey towards establishing an effective OS Ambassador Network starts with identifying the right individuals - those passionate about fostering transparency, accessibility, and collaboration in scientific research. The potential OS Ambassadors can emanate from a myriad of backgrounds, be it researchers, students, or administrative staff. These individuals are not merely defined by their roles, but by their dedication to propel an Open Science culture within the university campus.

Several universities across Europe have pioneered in this realm, successfully implementing robust OS Ambassador programs. Drawing upon their experiences and insights provides us a roadmap to identify and select potential ambassadors who can truly make a difference.

A Commitment to Open Science

The first attribute to look for in potential OS Ambassadors is an unwavering **commitment to Open Science principles**. Look for the marks they have left in their respective domains. Are there researchers who have been persistent in publishing in open-access journals or maintaining

transparency in their data? Are there students who are active in citizen science projects, or administrative staff who champion for transparency and accessibility in university operations? These are the individuals who don't just preach Open Science, but practice it.

CASE IN POINT: *University of Groningen*

Consider the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. They have achieved great strides in their OS Ambassador program by prioritizing individuals who have shown consistent devotion to Open Science in their work, whether it be research or administrative tasks. This kind of commitment is often a strong indicator of their passion for Open Science, ensuring that their ambassadorial role is not just a title, but a natural extension of their own values and practices

Leadership Potential and Ability to Inspire Others

Beyond commitment, the potential OS Ambassadors should also embody strong **leadership traits**. They should be able to captivate, motivate, and inspire others to embrace Open Science. This requires charismatic speakers, influencers in their fields, or simply individuals known for their commitment and enthusiasm for Open Science. Look for those who have a natural ability to inspire and motivate those around them.

CASE IN POINT: *University of Cambridge*

The University of Cambridge in the UK offers an insightful example in this regard. They have found success by focusing on individuals who are well-respected within their respective departments. These individuals often hold sway in their academic circles and are therefore uniquely positioned to promote Open Science principles among their peers. They also often have the capacity to influence policy and practice, making them effective ambassadors for change.

Expertise

In addition to the attributes mentioned above, OS ambassadors should have a high level of expertise in their respective fields. This helps ensure they understand the intricacies of their domain and can effectively promote open science principles within it. Deep knowledge in a specific field can also enable ambassadors to identify opportunities and challenges unique to their domain and adapt open science practices accordingly.

CASE IN POINT: *ENLIGHT Open Science Ambassador Network*

The ENLIGHT Open Science Ambassador Network is a collective of researchers associated with any of the ENLIGHT universities, who are actively involved in Open Science. These Ambassadors, who are passionate advocates of Open Science principles and methods, act as intermediaries between their university's research community and the ENLIGHT consortium.

Diversity: A Key Ingredient

Diversity is a vital component of any successful OS Ambassador program. It is paramount to ensure that the team of ambassadors represents a wide range of perspectives and experiences. This includes academic disciplines, career stages, cultural backgrounds, and more. Diversity enhances the richness of ideas, ensuring a comprehensive approach to promoting Open Science.

CASE IN POINT: *Karolinska Institutet*

An example comes from Sweden's Karolinska Institute. They have consciously incorporated diversity into their OS Ambassador program, resulting in a team of ambassadors that represent a wide range of research fields and ensures gender balance.

Process of Identification

After setting the attributes for ideal candidates for the ambassador role, the next task is - how do we discover these people? The key is in **effective communication**. It's crucial to spread the mission and core values of Open Science across the university extensively. Plan and execute various activities like **seminars**, **workshops**, and **open discussions**. Engage both students and faculty members in discussions revolving around Open Science. These initiatives will naturally attract those with a fervor for Open Science. Furthermore, these discussions and events can also be elevated to a collaborative level by organizing **joint events** at the EELISA INNOcore level.

Moreover, collaborate with department heads, research advisors, and student leaders to identify potential candidates. They can provide insights about individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to Open Science, shown leadership potential, and contributed to the diversity of thought.

Consider conducting an **open call** for OS Ambassadors. An open call allows for individuals who are interested to come forward, which may identify passionate individuals that might have otherwise been overlooked.

Identifying potential OS Ambassadors is a process that requires careful consideration and thoughtful approach. It is about finding those individuals who are deeply committed to Open Science, who have the ability to lead and inspire others, and who bring diverse perspectives. By learning from the experiences of successful OS Ambassador programs across Europe, universities can refine their identification process to build a team of effective ambassadors.

CASE IN POINT: *LERU Open Science Ambassadors*

In 2019, an Ad Hoc Group on Open Science (AHG on OS) was established to implement the LERU Open Science Roadmap, culminating in the 'Implementing Open Science' report. In 2020, the AHG on OS transitioned responsibilities to the LERU Ad Hoc Group 'Open Science Ambassadors' (AHG OSA), shifting the implementation focus to local institutions.

The primary role of an Open Science Ambassador at a LERU university involves providing leadership in executing the report's recommendations across the European Commission's eight pillars of Open Science. As advocates for Open Science, the ambassadors also serve as trusted advisors, addressing the concerns of the university community, acknowledging disciplinary differences, and promoting flexibility.

The AHG OSA, which includes ambassadors from LERU institutions, operates as a hub for assessing progress, sharing ideas, identifying

best practices, and collaborating on potential strategies. It also tackles emerging themes, with ambassador subgroups working alongside LERU policy groups during new policy development.

In the next chapters, we will dive deeper into the recruitment process, defining roles and responsibilities, providing effective training and support, and strategizing for active engagement. Each step, carefully designed and implemented, takes us closer to our goal - fostering a thriving Open Science culture within the university campus.

3. The Recruitment Process

The recruitment process of OS Ambassadors is a critical step in fostering an environment that champions transparency, collaboration, and accessibility in scientific research. As we learned from the previous chapter, identifying potential candidates is the first step. We now delve into the strategies that will transform potential candidates into active, effective Open Science Ambassadors.

Universities of science and technology across the globe, given their heavy reliance on research, have been at the forefront of implementing innovative recruitment strategies. As we explore this process, we will draw from their experiences to elucidate the various elements involved.

Setting Clear Expectations

The first step in the recruitment process is clearly defining what being an Open Science Ambassador entails. Potential candidates must understand their roles and responsibilities, the level of commitment required, and the expected outcomes of their ambassadorship.

CASE IN POINT: *Arqus European University Alliance*

The Arqus European University Alliance offers an example in this respect. They have recruited OS Ambassadors. The Arqus Open Science Ambassador program was seeking passionate and experienced Open Science ambassadors to promote Open Science principles across the Arqus alliance universities and beyond. Ambassadors are expected to:

- Inspire and engage researchers, especially PhD students and postdocs, to practice Open Science.
- Communicate needs and expectations regarding Open Science from a researcher's perspective to Arqus members.
- Support others with their expertise, particularly in the development of Open Science training materials and advising researchers aiming to incorporate more openness into their research processes.

Qualifications for ambassadors include a strong motivation to promote Open Science, significant experience in one or more Open Science fields, and basic knowledge of Open Science networks and infrastructures.

Inviting Applications

After setting clear expectations, the next step is to invite applications. There are several ways to do this, ranging from an **open call to nominations** or **direct appointments**. A combination of these methods can be an effective approach, as it allows the recruitment process to be both inclusive and targeted.

Evaluation and Selection

Once applications have been received, the next step is to evaluate candidates and select the ambassadors. Evaluation criteria will typically include the candidates' commitment to Open Science, leadership potential, ability to inspire others, and their contribution to the diversity of the ambassador team.

Providing a Platform for Engagement

Following the selection process, newly appointed ambassadors should be formally introduced to the university community. This introduction serves two purposes. First, it provides recognition to the ambassadors, boosting their morale and commitment. Second, it ensures that the rest of the community is aware of their roles and can reach out to them for guidance and support regarding Open Science.

CASE IN POINT: *Open Science Communities of Practice across Europe*

OSC-NL is a flourishing and expanding grassroots initiative, driven by community leadership, forming a robust social structure of Open Science Communities across the Netherlands. Comprising over 2000 researchers, the Dutch OSC network is primed to implement Open Science principles. Furthermore, OSC-NL contributes to policy and service development, reflecting the desires and requirements of their community members, and thus actively influencing the transition to Open Science based on researchers' experiences.

Open Science Community Utrecht (OSCU) was initiated to expedite the adoption of Open Science practices, particularly targeting those new to the field. Its objectives include: (1) fostering the exchange of Open Science practices among colleagues, (2) motivating and assisting researchers to take their initial or subsequent modest steps into the realm of Open Science, (3) contributing to Open Science policies, infrastructures, and support services, thereby moulding the transition to Open Science, and (4) investigating and encouraging collaborations between academics and societal stakeholders for mutual inspiration and co-creation.

Recruiting Open Science Ambassadors is a careful, meticulous process, but with a structured approach, it can result in a team of passionate individuals ready to advocate for open science principles. By setting clear expectations, inviting applications, selecting the right candidates, and properly introducing them to the university community, universities can ensure the success of their OS Ambassador programs. In the next chapter, we will explore the roles and responsibilities of an OS Ambassador in greater detail, drawing on the practices of various universities to provide a comprehensive overview.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of an OS Ambassador

Open Science Ambassadors (OSAs) play a vital role in promoting the principles of open science within their institutions. Their roles and responsibilities vary but center around advocacy, education, and support. This chapter delves into these roles, discussing the expectations and responsibilities of an OS Ambassador.

Advocacy

One of the primary roles of an OS Ambassador is advocacy. OSAs are champions of open science within their institutions. They promote open science principles and practices among their peers and superiors, advocating for institutional policies that support open science.

Advocacy often involves speaking at meetings and events, serving on relevant committees, and engaging in discussions about research practices and policies. Ambassadors may also be tasked with engaging external stakeholders, such as funders and policymakers, to promote open science.

Table 1. Responsibilities associated with the advocacy role

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
Advocacy	Promoting Open Science Principles and Practices	Advocacy begins with promoting the principles and practices of Open Science among peers and superiors. This promotion may take the form of personal interactions, formal presentations, or casual discussions during gatherings and events. OS Ambassadors emphasize the benefits of Open Science, such as enhanced transparency, increased reproducibility of results, broader collaboration, and greater public trust in research. The ambassador might showcase successful examples of Open Science within their institutions, demonstrating its real-world impacts, or bring to attention the latest trends, research, and tools in the Open Science landscape.
	Influencing Institutional Policies	Another important aspect of advocacy is contributing to the development and refinement of institutional policies to support Open Science. This might involve working with university leadership, research offices, libraries, or IT departments. Ambassadors can provide valuable input into creating conducive policies or modifying existing ones to better align with Open Science principles. OS Ambassadors can work towards institutional endorsement of the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable), push for infrastructural changes that enable the adoption of Open Science practices, or advocate for incentives and recognition for researchers who adopt Open Science principles.

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
	Engagement with External Stakeholders	Advocacy is not limited to the institution's confines. OS Ambassadors might also engage with external stakeholders to promote Open Science. This can include dialogues with funding bodies to encourage Open Science-friendly funding policies, such as mandates for open access publication or data sharing. They might also interact with policymakers to influence Open Science-friendly regulations and standards at the regional, national, or even international level. Such activities broaden the reach of Open Science, encouraging its adoption on a larger scale.
	Advocacy Through Personal Practice	Last but not least, OS Ambassadors advocate for Open Science by embodying its principles in their own research practices. By openly sharing their research outputs, using Open Science tools, and collaborating openly, they can serve as role models within their community. Their personal practices can provide tangible demonstrations of Open Science in action, inspiring others to follow suit.

The advocacy role of Open Science Ambassadors is complex and multifaceted, involving a blend of promotion, policy influence, stakeholder engagement, and personal practice. Successful advocacy can significantly accelerate the adoption of Open Science within an institution and beyond, making it a critical aspect of an Ambassador's duties.

Education

OS Ambassadors also have a vital role in educating their colleagues about open science. This involves informing peers about the benefits of open science, such as increased reproducibility, transparency, and public trust in science. It also includes training peers in open science practices.

Education can take many forms, from informal conversations to formal training sessions or workshops. It could also involve curating resources on open science, such as guides, toolkits, and online courses. Given the rapidly evolving nature of open science, OS Ambassadors often have to stay updated with the latest developments in the field, attending relevant training themselves.

Table 2. Responsibilities associated with the education role

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
Education	Disseminating the Philosophy and Benefits of Open Science	First and foremost, the educational role of an Open Science Ambassador involves informing colleagues about the philosophy and ethos of open science. This involves clarifying the principle that knowledge should be open and accessible to all and explaining the tangible benefits that can stem from such a philosophy. Increased reproducibility, transparency, and public trust are key benefits of open science that the ambassador needs to communicate. They need to explain how open science can foster a more collaborative and inclusive research environment, increase the speed of scientific discovery, and ensure that the outputs of research are more readily available to those who can benefit from them.

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
	Training Peers in Open Science Practices	Aside from disseminating the philosophy of open science, ambassadors are also responsible for training their peers in the practical aspects of open science. They need to familiarize their colleagues with the tools and practices that can make science more open, including preprints, open data, open code, open access publications, and the use of open licenses. Training can take the form of formal workshops or seminars, as well as more informal one-on-one sessions or group discussions. The training sessions should be designed to cater to varying levels of familiarity with open science, ensuring that everyone from novices to experienced researchers can benefit.
	Curating Resources on Open Science	Another important educational responsibility of an Open Science Ambassador is to curate resources on open science. These resources could include guides, toolkits, online courses, or lists of relevant literature. By creating and maintaining a repository of open science resources, ambassadors can provide their colleagues with the tools they need to learn about and implement open science practices.
	Staying Updated and Self-education	Finally, given the rapidly evolving nature of open science, ambassadors are tasked with staying updated with the latest trends, developments, and debates in the field. This could involve attending conferences, webinars, or training sessions, reading relevant literature, or participating in online forums and discussions. Staying updated is essential for the ambassador to provide the most current and relevant advice to their colleagues.

The educational role of an Open Science Ambassador is multifaceted and essential. By disseminating the philosophy of open science, training peers in open science practices, curating resources, and staying updated with the latest developments, ambassadors can drive the adoption of open science in their institutions and make a lasting impact on their colleagues' research practices.

Support

Ambassadors provide support to researchers in their open science practices. This could involve assisting colleagues with making their research openly available, whether it's data, code, or publications. They could provide advice on using open science tools, complying with open access policies, or applying for open science badges.

Support could also involve mediating between researchers and other stakeholders in the institution, such as the library or the IT department. Ambassadors can help address technical or logistical barriers to open science, advocating for the necessary resources and infrastructure.

Table 3. Responsibilities associated with the support role

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
Support	Assisting with Open Science Practices	Open Science Ambassadors (OSAs) play a vital role in providing practical support to researchers in their open science endeavors. The breadth and depth of Open Science can sometimes be overwhelming, especially for researchers who are new to it. OSAs step in to guide and assist their colleagues in making their research more open. This might involve helping researchers navigate the process of making their research outputs - such as data, code, or publications - openly available. OSAs could provide guidance on selecting appropriate repositories, understanding and applying open licenses, and using specific Open Science tools or platforms. Moreover, they can offer advice on complying with open access policies of different journals, research funders, or the institution itself. This could include interpreting policy language, suggesting strategies to meet policy requirements, or assisting with the process of applying for waivers or exemptions if necessary. OSAs might also support researchers in applying for open science badges, which are a form of recognition for researchers who adopt open practices. They can help understand the criteria for different badges, assist in compiling the necessary evidence, and guide through the application process.
	Mediating Between Researchers and Other Stakeholders	Open Science Ambassadors also serve as a bridge between researchers and other stakeholders in the institution involved in the Open Science process. These stakeholders could include the library, the IT department, research support services, or the institution's leadership. For example, if a researcher is encountering technical difficulties in using an Open Science tool or platform, the OSA could liaise with the IT department to resolve the issue. If a researcher is unsure about the appropriate repository for their data, the OSA could consult with the library or research support services to provide the necessary guidance. In cases where institutional policies or infrastructure are hindering the adoption of Open Science, OSAs can advocate on behalf of the researchers. They can communicate the challenges and needs to the institution's leadership and work towards obtaining the necessary resources and infrastructure.

The supporting role of an Open Science Ambassador is multifaceted and essential. By providing practical assistance, advice, and serving as a liaison between researchers and other stakeholders, OSAs play a significant role in overcoming barriers to Open Science. Their support not only eases the implementation of Open Science practices but also fosters a more supportive and conducive environment for Open Science in their institutions.

Community Building

In addition to these roles, OS Ambassadors often have a role in building a community around open science within their institutions. They can help organize events, such as open science fairs or hackathons, that bring together researchers interested in open science.

Building a community can also involve online activities, such as managing a mailing list or a chat group on open science. This community-building role contributes to a culture change towards open science, fostering an environment that values and rewards open science practices.

CASE IN POINT: *Open Science Community Delft*

The Open Science Community Delft operates as a learning community where members aid each other in improving their open, collaborative, and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) practices. They achieve this by sharing their expertise and taking part in various educational opportunities. The community provides the environment and resources needed for its members to initiate their own open projects. It is a dynamically evolving and learning entity, effectively a perpetual "work-in-progress", always open to new insights and suggestions. The Open Science Community Delft serves as a repository of information, a host of events, and a wellspring of stories.

Table 4. Responsibilities associated with the community building role

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
Community building	Organizing Open Science Events	One of the most effective ways of building a community is through organizing events centered around open science. Open Science Ambassadors could spearhead or facilitate the organization of open science fairs, hackathons, seminars, workshops, or roundtable discussions. These events bring together researchers, students, and staff interested in open science, promoting knowledge sharing, collaboration, and the development of new ideas.
		For instance, an open science fair could showcase open science projects from different disciplines, while a hackathon could challenge participants to create new open science tools or solutions. Seminars or workshops could provide platforms for discussing open science trends, sharing success stories, or collectively addressing challenges.

Roles	Responsibilities	Description
	Cultivating Online Open Science Communities	In today's digital age, community building is not limited to physical interactions. Open Science Ambassadors can foster online communities, utilizing digital platforms to bring together those interested in open science. For instance, they could manage a mailing list, sharing regular updates on open science news, resources, events, and opportunities. They could also create and moderate a chat group or an online forum, providing a space for continuous discussion, inquiry, and collaboration on open science. These online communities can cater to diverse needs – for example, some members might be seeking advice on open science practices, others might want to share their open science experiences, while others might be looking for collaboration opportunities. A vibrant online community can foster a sense of belonging, engagement, and collective learning among its members.
	Shaping Open Science Culture	The community-building role of Open Science Ambassadors significantly contributes to culture change towards open science within institutions. By fostering an environment that values, practices, and rewards open science, they are gradually shaping a culture that views openness as the norm rather than the exception.

The roles and responsibilities of Open Science Ambassadors are indeed manifold and challenging but equally rewarding. Through their contribution, ambassadors can significantly advance open science, shaping research practices to be more transparent, reliable, and inclusive.

However, it's essential to acknowledge that while this chapter has outlined some common roles and responsibilities, the specifics can and do vary across institutions. Understanding the context of each institution is crucial in shaping the Ambassador's role and determining the most effective strategies for promoting open science. The next chapter will discuss how to provide effective training and support to OS Ambassadors, ensuring they are equipped to fulfill their diverse roles.

5. Effective Training and Support for OS Ambassadors

For Open Science Ambassadors to be effective in their roles, they require robust training and enduring support mechanisms. This section delves into the multi-faceted strategies to ensure ambassadors are thoroughly equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills, and resources, and receive sustained support throughout their tenure.

Figure 1. Dimensions of OS Ambassadors training and support

Initial Induction: Open Science Principles and Best Practices

The cornerstone of preparing OS Ambassadors lies in conducting comprehensive initial induction sessions. These sessions should offer an in-depth understanding of the ethos of open science, its varied methodologies, and global best practices, along with the specific guidelines laid down by the university. A blend of theoretical teachings and hands-on exercises would ensure all-round proficiency. This foundational training could be effectively delivered through various channels such as online modules, workshops, seminars, and webinars.

CASE IN POINT: The BLOO-OS Bootcamp

The BLOOM-OS bootcamp has the potential to evolve into an annual event, specifically aimed at induction, serving as a platform where new Open Science ambassadors can arise.

Perpetual Learning Opportunities

Given the dynamic nature of Open Science, it's pivotal for ambassadors to stay abreast of the latest advancements and shifts in the field. Facilitating perpetual learning opportunities like advanced-level workshops, lectures from renowned open science experts, and access to e-learning courses and resources would keep ambassadors at the forefront of open science trends. Regular updates on changes to open science policy, novel tools, and practices are essential.

This catalog encompasses events, curated by members of the Open Science Community Delft, which could be of relevance to other associates. Should any member desire to enrich this list with an additional event, they are respectfully encouraged to submit their proposition through an issue on GitHub. By adhering to a co-design approach, the community welcomes proposals for other events from university community members, thus promoting active engagement and growth within the Open Science community.

Implementation of a Mentorship or Peer-Support Program

Fostering a supportive network can be instrumental in aiding ambassadors to effectively manage the challenges and responsibilities of their role. Implementing a **mentorship or peer-support scheme** can promote knowledge sharing, offer emotional support, and encourage collaborative problem-solving. **Experienced ambassadors** or university staff with expertise in open science could serve as mentors, providing invaluable advice and guidance to new or less-experienced ambassadors.

Provision of Essential Resources, Tools, and Platforms

OS Ambassadors must have access to pertinent tools and resources to promote and implement open science effectively. This could include open science toolkits, instructional guides, databases, or platforms dedicated to sharing open data or research outputs. A curated list of these resources or a dedicated portal, such as an 'OS Training Hub,' can significantly assist ambassadors in their tasks.

Institutional Support and Recognition

Last but not least, acknowledging the importance of institutional support is essential. Recognition of the hard work and achievements of ambassadors can significantly enhance their morale and motivation. Regular interactions can help identify any issues they may be facing and provide timely support and guidance.

In conclusion, comprehensive training and sustained support are critical to empowering OS Ambassadors with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to promote open science successfully. By dedicating efforts to these aspects, universities can ensure the durability and effectiveness of their OS Ambassador programs, further enhancing the scope and influence of open science.

6. Strategies for Active Engagement

The efficacy of any Open Science Ambassador network leans heavily not just on the selection of appropriate ambassadors or their clear roles and responsibilities, but also on how actively engaged these ambassadors are in spreading the principles of open science throughout the university. This chapter focuses on various strategies (see Figure 1) to cultivate such active engagement, encompassing hosting regular events, developing individualized outreach plans, and fostering collaboration among university stakeholders.

Figure 2. Recommended strategies for OSA engagement
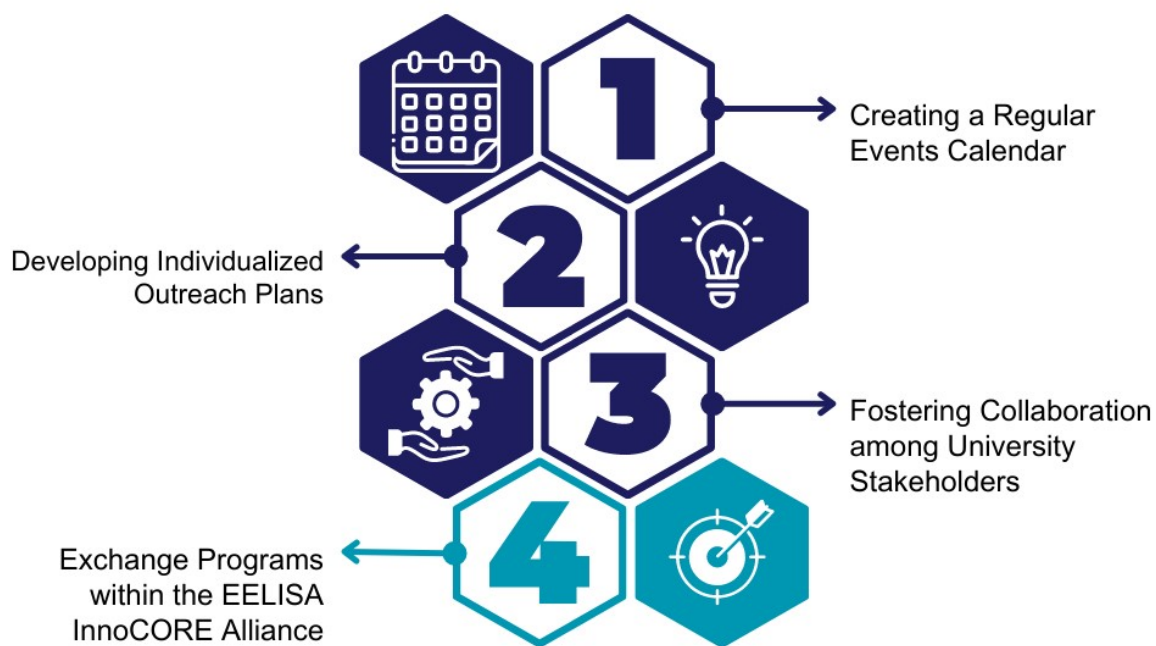
Creating a Regular Events Calendar

Frequent engagement in a variety of events is a tried and tested method of keeping OSAs actively involved. Regular open science events provide a platform for OSAs to discuss, learn, and network. They can partake in open forums to exchange ideas, workshops to learn and teach new open science techniques, or lectures that broaden their understanding of open science.

Involving OSAs in the organization and execution of these events can keep them actively engaged. By taking ownership, ambassadors will likely become more invested in the initiative and their roles, and the firsthand experience they gain in planning and coordinating will be invaluable.

Developing Individualized Outreach Plans

A tailored outreach plan specific to each ambassador can also help boost engagement. Open Science Ambassadors come from a variety of departments or research areas, each with its unique dynamics. An outreach plan customized to fit the ambassador's specific environment will ensure they remain actively engaged and their work has the most impact.

OSAs can start by assessing the needs within their departments or research areas. Following this, they can design an outreach plan that uses suitable methods of communication and engagement, while also considering their own strengths and limitations. The creation of these plans empowers ambassadors, providing them with a sense of ownership and autonomy that can be a potent motivator for active engagement.

Fostering Collaboration among University Stakeholders

Another critical strategy for active engagement involves fostering collaborations within the university. Partnering with other university stakeholders such as librarians, research support services, and senior leadership can help OSAs feel part of a larger initiative, increasing their motivation and engagement.

For instance, collaboration with librarians, who often possess knowledge in information management and access, can provide OSAs with additional insight into open science. Working with research support services can align the OSA program with the university's broader research strategy. Engaging with the senior leadership of the university can bring about an institutional acceptance and promotion of open science, further motivating OSAs.

Exchange Programs within the EELISA Alliance

Exchange programs within the EELISA Alliance can be an innovative and compelling way to keep OS Ambassadors actively engaged. These programs offer OSAs an opportunity to learn from their peers at other institutions, share best practices, and bring new ideas back to their home universities.

Participation in an exchange program can invigorate the ambassadors by exposing them to different perspectives and experiences. This exposure can provide fresh ideas and new ways of promoting open science, thus enhancing the ambassadors' efforts at their own institutions. The cultural exchange that these programs foster also contributes to the diversity and inclusivity goals of the Open Science movement.

This strategy, in combination with regular events, tailored outreach plans, collaborations, and mentorship programs, creates a comprehensive approach to maintaining the active engagement of Open Science Ambassadors.

The active engagement of Open Science Ambassadors is central to the success of the OSA Network.

As we proceed, it's crucial to remember that active engagement isn't a one-time effort but an ongoing process. It requires dedication, flexibility, and a passion for open science. By actively engaging OSAs, universities can cultivate a culture that values transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration, contributing to the advancement of science and society as a whole.

CASE IN POINT: *SEA-EU Open Science Staff Week*

The reSEArch-Eu project of the European Seas Alliance (SEA EU) conducted the "Open Science Staff Week" (OSSW) in Cádiz, co-organized by the University of Malta. The focus was on advancing a common Open Science data management policy. The reSEArch-UE project's key goals involve connecting scientific data repositories among consortium universities and fostering an open science culture via training activities.

7. Evaluation and Feedback

Assessment of the Open Science Ambassador program and network is indispensable for its continual refinement, growth, and improvement. By adopting a systematic approach to evaluation and feedback, the program can accurately gauge its efficacy, identify areas of improvement, and provide ambassadors with the support and guidance they need to excel in their roles. This chapter outlines the critical components of such an evaluation and feedback mechanism.

Figure 3. Components of the Evaluation and Feedback Mechanism
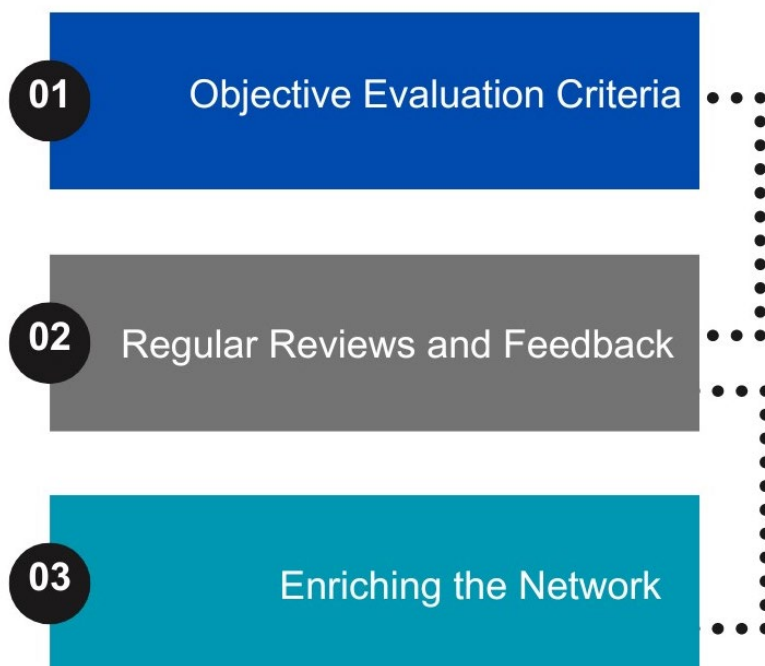
Objective Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation starts by establishing clear, objective criteria. These criteria should be fair, transparent, and tied to the core objectives of the OSA network. Performance metrics could include the number of open science workshops or events conducted by the ambassador, the number of researchers or students reached, or specific project outcomes tied to the promotion of open science within the institution.

The criteria could also include softer measures, such as an ambassador's ability to foster collaborations within the university, their engagement in mentorship programs, or their contributions to the community-building activities. The inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative metrics ensures a balanced and comprehensive evaluation of the ambassadors' performance.

Regular Reviews and Feedback

Once the evaluation criteria are established, it's vital to conduct regular reviews. These reviews should incorporate feedback not just from the ambassadors themselves but also from the wider university community, including researchers, students, and other stakeholders the ambassadors interact with.

Self-evaluations can provide insights into an ambassador's perspective on their performance, any challenges they have faced, and their suggestions for improvement. Peer feedback from other OS Ambassadors can also be invaluable, offering a view from individuals

who understand the intricacies of the role. Feedback from the wider community can provide an external perspective on the impact of the ambassador's work.

Enriching the Network

The primary goal of evaluation and feedback should be to enrich and strengthen the OSA network. Feedback should be viewed as a valuable resource for identifying both common challenges and best practices within the network. This data can then be used to develop strategies that bolster the network's overall effectiveness and impact.

For example, if feedback reveals that ambassadors in particular areas feel isolated or are struggling with specific issues, steps can be taken to strengthen connections between these ambassadors and others within the network. This could be achieved through regular virtual meetings, mentorship programs, or the development of collaborative projects.

Additionally, if feedback highlights that certain ambassadors have developed effective strategies for promoting open science within their institution, these insights can be shared across the network. By fostering this kind of knowledge exchange, the network can ensure that all ambassadors benefit from the experiences and successes of their peers.

It is also crucial to consider how the network itself can be expanded and diversified. Feedback can help identify gaps in representation or areas where the network could be strengthened. This could lead to targeted recruitment efforts or collaborations with other networks or organizations.

Feedback should not only be used to identify areas of improvement but also to recognize and celebrate the successes of the ambassadors and the network as a whole. Regular recognition of achievements can boost morale, foster a sense of community, and encourage ambassadors to continue their efforts in promoting open science.

In conclusion, regular evaluation and feedback play a pivotal role in enriching the OSA network. They provide the insights needed to foster stronger connections between ambassadors, promote knowledge exchange, and continually expand and diversify the network. This process is not a one-off task but a recurring cycle that encourages a culture of continual learning, improvement, and excellence within the OSA network.

8. Concluding Remarks

Open Science Ambassadors are instrumental in cultivating an environment characterized by openness, transparency, and collaboration in scientific research. This guide lays out a strategy for the EELISA alliance's universities to effectively enlist and involve these ambassadors, thereby securing the ongoing growth and success of the open science initiative.

In essence, the establishment and flourishing of the EELISA INNOCore Open Science Ambassadors network rely on more than just the ambassadors themselves. It equally depends on a strong and unique **institutional** and **digital footprint**.

Leveraging **digital tools** to aid the activities of the ambassadors is crucial. In today's digital era, the astute application of technology can simplify communication, boost collaboration, and expand the reach of the network's efforts.

Moreover, enhancing the digital visibility of the **Open Science community** should be at the forefront of our priorities. By establishing a readily accessible and visible digital space, we can enable the community to grow into a powerful learning community. This space will act as a central meeting point for interaction, knowledge sharing, and collective learning, promoting growth, inclusiveness, and ongoing improvement in Open Science practices.

To wrap up, the way forward entails a blend of a strong identity, skilled usage of digital tools, and a dynamic digital space to fully unlock the potential of the EELISA Open Science Ambassadors network and the wider Open Science community..