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Federal Department of the Environment,  
Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC

**Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE**  
Energy Research and Cleantech

## **SWEET Programme**

# **Communication & Dissemination Guideline**

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## 1 Introduction

This guideline outlines the rules and procedures for communication and dissemination by SWEET consortia. It aims to ensure that all activities and resulting outputs are treated consistently, meet the required quality standards, and comply with the programme's communication and dissemination requirements. It clarifies when approval by the SFOE is required and when merely informing the SFOE is sufficient. It also aims to support consortia in planning communication strategically and efficiently, thereby contributing to the visibility and impact of the SWEET programme.

The guideline is intended for SWEET consortia, particularly for coordinators and KTT and integration experts, who are responsible for ensuring that the rules and processes described here are understood, communicated, and applied consistently throughout their consortia.

The SFOE reserves the right to modify this guideline at any time. Updated versions will be sent to coordinators and KTT and integration experts.

The SWEET programme uses the following terminology:

- **Activities:** the research, innovation, integration, and KTT activities of consortia.
- **Outputs:** the immediate results of the activities. Examples include peer-reviewed publications; reports; policy briefs; white papers; invited talks; events (conferences, workshops, courses, ...); completed PhD and Master theses; simulation tools, models, data sets, data bases; patents applications; awarded patents; licenses; spin-off companies.
- **Stakeholders:** persons and organisations that have legitimate interests in or concerns about the programme and the consortia supported through the programme or that have knowledge that the consortia need to attain their objectives. ("Legitimate" means that the stakeholders are positively/negatively affected by and have a positive/negative effect on the outputs and outcomes.) Of primary importance to the SWEET programme are non-academic stakeholders, which may be categorised into three broad groups:
  - Economic stakeholders, e.g., private sector companies, umbrella and professional associations (including networks and clusters), [companies associated with the Swiss confederation](#) (e.g., SBB and Swisscom).
  - Political stakeholders, e.g., decisionmakers (federal, cantonal, and communal levels), administrations (federal, cantonal, and communal levels).
  - Societal stakeholders, e.g., non-commercial research organisations, non-governmental organisations (including foundations), citizen associations, cooperatives.
- **Communication:** informing stakeholders about the consortium, its activities, and its outputs as well as demonstrating their values and benefits.
- **Dissemination:** providing outputs to stakeholders (with the help of multipliers such as association) such as industrial or commercial actors and policymakers, with the aim of encouraging the use of these outputs.



## 2 Core principles

### 2.1 Responsibilities

#### 2.1.1 Responsibilities of consortia

Each consortium is responsible for the planning, implementation, and quality assurance of how activities and outputs are communicated and how outputs are disseminated. This includes:

- Implementing and further developing the communication of activities and outputs as described in the proposal, aligned with the SWEET identity and objectives;
- Establishing an internal quality-assurance process to ensure the quality of all outputs. The process should be documented and the documentation be distributed to all members, ensuring that all outputs beyond short social media-posts (with the exception of peer-reviewed publications) are reviewed by **at least two consortium members from different work packages**, with reviewer names specified in the case of reports.
- Coordinating the communication and dissemination of the consortium by the KTT expert to ensure that these are coherent and well-aligned (content wise and timely).

In carrying out these responsibilities, consortia operate autonomously and do not represent government positions or engage in negotiations on behalf of the Swiss Confederation. This principle applies in particular to:

- interactions with political stakeholders;
- participation in public debates;
- government-level and diplomatic contacts (see Section 5.3).

Any situation that could be perceived as representing the Swiss Confederation politically must be coordinated with the SFOE well in advance.

#### 2.1.2 Responsibilities of the SFOE

The SFOE is responsible for communicating the SWEET programme as a whole, including the synthesis of findings across consortia. The SFOE:

- reviews outputs and activities as defined in Section 3;
- supports consortia through feedback during the approval process;
- coordinates government-level and diplomatic contacts (see Section 5.3).

### 2.2 Communication criteria

All communication of activities and outputs within the SWEET programme must meet formal and content-related criteria.

#### 2.2.1 Formal criteria

The communication of activities and outputs must:

- comply with SWEET communication rules, including approval processes (see Section 3), acknowledgement requirements and logo specifications (see Section 6);
- respect the programme's visual identity where applicable.

#### 2.2.2 Content-related criteria

The communication of activities and outputs towards non-academic stakeholders must:



- focus on clarity and a level of detail appropriate to the specific target audience;
- focus on quality rather than the quantity of activities and outputs;
- clearly indicate which statements are directly based on robust scientific results<sup>1</sup>, and where interpretations and assumptions are introduced;
- not express personal political views or commentary under the SWEET identity; such views may only be expressed in a personal capacity, or as an employee of a member institution;
- If recommendations are included, they must be based on robust and relevant results and should be phrased, for example, as follows:
  - It is advisable that [non-academic stakeholder] ...
  - It is recommended that [non-academic stakeholder] ...
  - [non-academic stakeholder] could ...

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<sup>1</sup> What is considered a robust result in the SWEET context is explained in detail in the SWEET Synthesis Guideline.



### 3 Information flow and approval by SFOE

Figure 1 provides an overview of when the SFOE must review and approve communications of activities and outputs. In general, any activity or output whose content is **policy relevant** or any output to be **disseminated in the press** must be submitted to the SFOE for **prior review and approval**, as must any new communication channels that are set up. For all other communication of activities and outputs, the SFOE and the Monitoring Panel Head (MPH) must only be informed.

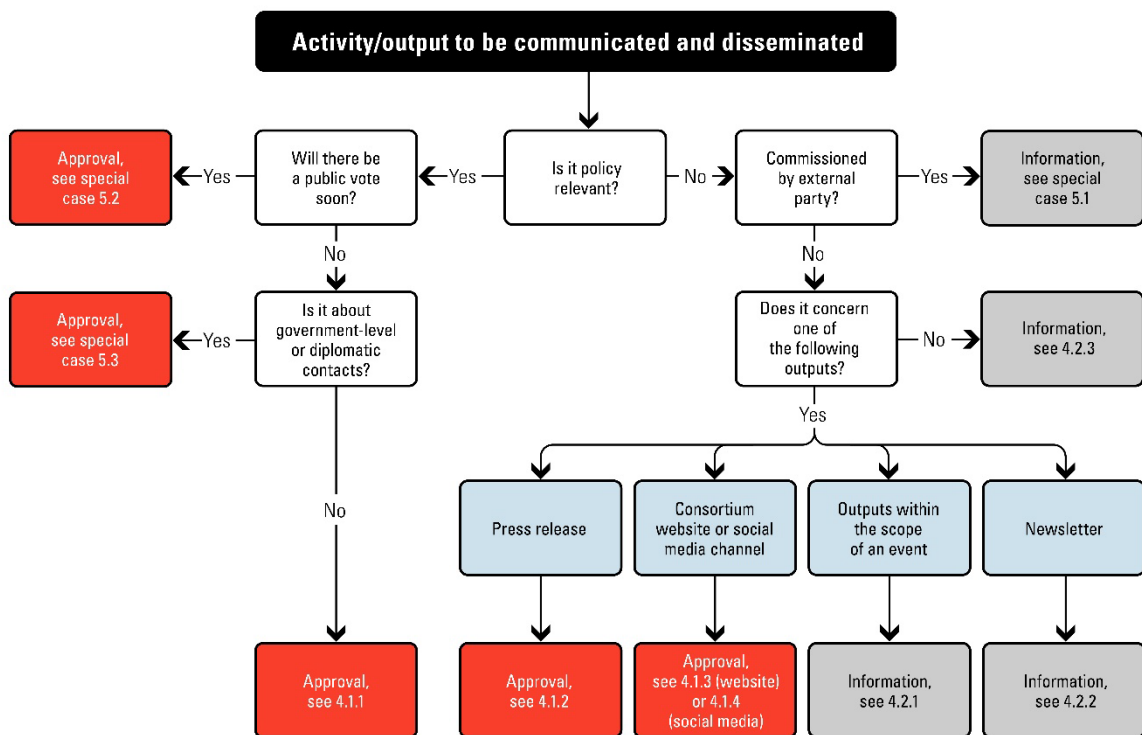


Figure 1: Overview of when approval is required and when information is sufficient.

#### 3.1 What does “policy relevant” mean?

In our context, the content of an activity or output is considered policy relevant when it concerns findings that are relevant to current societal or political debates, or to those expected in the near future in the context of implementing Switzerland’s Energy Strategy 2050 and long-term climate strategy, and could therefore inform public decision-making. This includes findings that highlight opportunities for improving policies or implementation practices, as well as findings that could easily be misunderstood or used selectively in political debates. Typical output formats include policy briefs, white papers and other documents containing policy recommendations.

##### Policy brief

A policy brief is a short, focused document (2–4 pages) that addresses a specific policy issue and provides clear, actionable recommendations based on a consortium’s findings. The brief should outline possible implications of the recommendations and briefly consider alternative options. The brief is aimed at a selected stakeholder or stakeholder group and written in a style that is appropriate to them. A policy brief is written in a national language (German or French). If multiple languages are needed, a separate document should be prepared for each language.



The following document from the EU may provide helpful tips: [Sharing evidence with policymakers - Publications Office of the EU](#)

Information can also be found in the respective workshop slides at [Transdisciplinarity, Integration and Knowledge and Technology Transfer for SWEET](#)

#### **White paper**

A white paper is a structured, in-depth document (more detailed than a policy brief, typically 6–12 pages), that examines a specific issue and provides evidence-based analysis of problems, context, and possible solutions. It aims to support a selected stakeholder or stakeholder group to understand an issue, explore options, and inform decision-making. A white paper is written in a national language (German or French). If multiple languages are needed, a separate document should be prepared for each language.

### **3.2 Why is approval necessary and what should be done if it is not received?**

Approval serves as a coordination mechanism for communication and dissemination of policy-relevant content. Such content may potentially be communicated in parallel with other activities or outputs of the Swiss Confederation, address overlapping target audiences, or relate to ongoing policy processes. Prior review by the SFOE ensures that the policy-relevant content is placed in an appropriate broader context, that timing is coordinated, and that the potential for misunderstandings or misinterpretations is reduced. Approval does not transfer responsibility for content to the SFOE, nor does it restrict the scientific autonomy of consortia.

If, following the review, the SFOE sets conditions that must be met before approval, the consortium must make the necessary adjustments until approval is granted. If the consortium makes no changes or cannot obtain approval, communication and dissemination of policy-relevant content under the SWEET name and with the SWEET logo is not permitted. However, the consortium may communicate or disseminate the content under the name of a member institution. In this case, the consortium may not include the output in its annual reporting.



## 4 Procedures

This section describes the procedures for approval and information, depending on the nature of the activity or output, see Figure 1. If consortia are unsure how to classify an activity or output, they should contact the [SWEET Office](#) well in advance of communicating or disseminating them.

### 4.1 Approval

#### 4.1.1 Outputs or activities whose content is policy relevant

The consortium must submit the respective output or description of the activity to the [SWEET Office](#) and MPH well in advance of any intended publication or before the activity takes place, including:

- Objective of the output/activity
- A brief explanation of why the output/activity is policy relevant
- Target audience
- Indication of whether the output will be translated into other languages/ in which languages the activity takes place
- Details of the internal quality-assurance process (i.e., the two persons who reviewed it)
- If applicable: All related materials (e.g., press release, videos). If not yet available, indicate what is planned and when it will be ready for review

The SFOE and MPH will review the submission and within approximately **four working weeks** inform the consortium whether the submission is approved or whether revisions are requested. If revisions are required, the consortium must resubmit the updated version to the SFOE and MPH for review. This cycle should occur no more than twice before the SFOE issues a final decision.

Consortia are therefore expected to plan their submissions accordingly, taking into account that a review cycle requires approximately four working weeks. Late submissions or insufficient planning will not justify accelerated review or exceptions to this process.

Please note that public holidays and vacation periods (e.g., summer holidays) may cause delays. In such cases, additional time should be planned.

#### 4.1.2 Publishing a press release

The process described in Section 4.1.1 can be shortened, a response regarding a press release (with all related outputs) can be expected within approximately **two work weeks**.

#### 4.1.3 Setting up the consortium's own website

Before a consortium's website is launched, the SFOE will review it based on the criteria in Section 6.4. Once the website has been approved, the consortium can launch it. The SFOE will link to the consortium's website on the website of the SWEET programme. The SFOE expects consortia to maintain their websites.

#### 4.1.4 Setting up social-media channels

In addition to the SWEET acknowledgement on the information page, the SWEET social media logo (see Section 6.1.2) must also be used. The SFOE will verify these two points before approving social-media channels.



## 4.2 Information

### 4.2.1 Outputs presented/published as part of an event

No approval is required for outputs presented/published as part of an event not organised by the SFOE. The SFOE and the MPH should be informed.

Flyer: If the event is organised by the consortium, the consortium-specific SWEET logo and an acknowledgement (see Section 6.2) should be included on the flyer announcing the event. If the event is not organised by the consortium, but individual presentations are based on the consortium's results, neither the consortium-specific SWEET logo nor acknowledgement should be used on the flyer.

Slides: Corresponding slides must follow the standard logo and acknowledgement rules (see Section 6.1.1 and 6.2).

### 4.2.2 Newsletter

If the consortium publishes a newsletter, the SFOE and the other consortia should be informed approximately **one week** before the publication of each newsletter edition. This allows for coordination between the different newsletters to prevent simultaneous or near-simultaneous publication.

### 4.2.3 Other outputs and activities

Inform the SFOE and the MPH (after publication) in a regular update during the year (e.g. during alignment meetings; see the Monitoring Guideline) or at the latest with the next monitoring.



## 5 Special cases

The following describes certain special cases that do not always apply or do not apply to every consortium.

### 5.1 External mandates

If a consortium receives an external mandate (e.g., a collaboration partner or stakeholder commissions the consortium to carry out a study and pays for it), the SFOE and the MPH must be informed. If outputs result from such a mandate, it must be clearly stated that this is not an actual SWEET output, but was only indirectly made possible by SWEET:

- Do not use the SWEET logo.
- In the acknowledgement, thank the actual sponsor and state that it is a SWEET-associated output. The examples below use *acronym* to denote the consortium's acronym.
  - “This *work (specify the kind of work)* was commissioned by XY and is associated with the SWEET consortium *acronym*.”
  - “The research published in this publication was carried out with the support of XY. It is an associated publication of the SWEET consortium *acronym*.”

### 5.2 Popular votes

Prior to popular votes (e.g., initiatives or referendums), federal authorities and their programmes – including SWEET – are subject to increased public scrutiny. To prevent that communications by SWEET consortia are perceived as attempting to influence public opinion in the run-up to a vote, consortia and their members may communicate under the SWEET name only if:

- the output is based on completed scientific work, and its content and publication date were already scheduled in the proposal,
- the communication date has not been changed due to the vote,
- all publications and messages have been reviewed and approved by the SFOE in accordance with the processes described in Section 4.1.

### 5.3 Government-level and diplomatic contacts

As stated in Section 2.1.1, consortia do not act on behalf of the Swiss Confederation. However, government-level and diplomatic contacts require additional coordination.

The following rules apply to all contacts with foreign governments, foreign diplomats in Switzerland, and Swiss diplomats abroad:

- Prior approval: All requests, e.g., for cooperation, meetings, and exchanges with government-level actors must be approved beforehand by the SFOE.
- Spontaneous contacts: If a request occurs spontaneously, e.g., as part of a reception, the SFOE must be informed immediately afterwards.
- Follow-up reporting: The SFOE must be informed about subsequent contacts and actions.
- Participation: The Swiss Government and/or the SFOE must have the possibility to delegate a representative to government-level meetings.

The goal of these requirements is to ensure that the SFOE can inform other Federal Departments about the government-level contacts and, if appropriate, provide consortia with relevant context. Consortia should inform the [SWEET Office](#), which will act as conduit for the relevant people within the SFOE.



## 6 Specifications

### 6.1 Logos

The logos to be used are provided by the SFOE. No other logos are to be created or used.

#### 6.1.1 Consortium-specific SWEET logo

A SWEET logo specific to each consortium is provided by the SFOE. This logo consists of the consortium's acronym and the SWEET logo, as shown in Figure 2. This logo should be used for all communication activities carried out by the consortium where visual integration is possible. The logo **must not** be used for activities not directly carried out by the consortium (e.g. events not organised by the consortium (see Section 4.2.1) or external mandates (see Section 5.1)).



Figure 2. Consortium-specific SWEET logo.

#### 6.1.2 Social media profile logo

An additional smaller version of the logo (see Figure 3) is provided to be used as a profile picture for social media channels like YouTube. The profile logo is the same for all SWEET consortia (recognition value), the chosen profile name next to it makes it specific to each consortium.



Figure 3. Social media SWEET logo.

#### 6.1.3 SFOE Logo

The SFOE logo (see Figure 4) **must only be used in exceptional cases and is only permitted with prior approval from the SFOE** (see also Section 6.5). One such case is the website where the SFOE logo is mandatory (see Section 6.4). The SWEET and SFOE logos must not be placed directly next to each other<sup>2</sup>. Logos must be requested directly from the SFOE; logos downloaded from the internet **must not be used**.

<sup>2</sup> The use of the logo of the Swiss Confederation is subject to specific rules, please cf. [CD-Manual \(admin.ch\)](#).



Figure 4. Logo of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy a) in portrait format and b) in landscape format.

## 6.2 Funding acknowledgement

All communicated or disseminated outputs must include a proper acknowledgement of funding from the SWEET programme. The examples below use *acronym* to denote the consortium's acronym.

- Written communications: “This work (*specify the kind of work*) was performed by the *acronym* consortium, which is funded by the Swiss Federal Office of Energy's SWEET programme.” Specific examples:
  - “This flyer was produced by the *acronym* consortium, which is funded by the Swiss Federal Office of Energy's SWEET programme.”
  - “This research was carried out by the *acronym* consortium, which is funded by the Swiss Federal Office of Energy's SWEET programme.”
- Website and social media: “*acronym* is a consortium funded by the Swiss Federal Office of Energy's SWEET programme and coordinated by *Host Institution*.”
- Visual presentations: One of the preceding acknowledgements must be used in addition to the consortium-specific SWEET logo. Depending on the type of visual presentation, the acknowledgement sentence can be slightly smaller than other elements displayed but must remain clearly legible.

In addition, outputs like reports must also include a statement that the authors bear sole responsibility for the conclusions and the results (Example: “The authors bear sole responsibility for the conclusions and the results presented in this publication.”).

## 6.3 Open access

The SFOE subscribes to the notion of Open Science and expects that results and data generated by consortia are publicly accessible. This means that consortia should ensure open access to scientific publications that result from the consortium's work:

- If institutions themselves do not provide funding for open access, the publication costs can be covered with SWEET funds, as long as the costs are in line with the SNSF's measures.<sup>3</sup>
- If the consortium plans to submit a paper to a journal without immediate open access, then it should ensure that the paper is open access immediately after the embargo period. In such a case, the consortium should also inform the SFOE and the MPH when notifying them about the publication (see Section 4.2.3) that it is not (yet) open access, why not and when an open-access version will be available.

Consortia should also ensure open access to data that result from the consortium's work. Should legal restrictions prevent open access to the data as originally generated, consortia are expected to create a publicly accessible version through aggregation, anonymisation, or normalisation. Furthermore, consortia are encouraged to publish data that is of national interest on the Swiss public administration's central

<sup>3</sup> Starting 1 January 2027, the SNSF will cap the covered charges at CHF 3'500 and will not cover charges higher than this cap, not even partially: [SNSF to adapt its open access funding](#).



[portal for open government data](#) and data that is related to the modelling of the Swiss energy-system on [CROSSDat](#). (The SFOE can be consulted at [ogd@bfe.admin.ch](mailto:ogd@bfe.admin.ch) for advice about publishing data on the portal.)

#### 6.4 Website

As part of the consortium's communication and dissemination activities, each consortium must create a website ([www.sweet-acronym.ch](http://www.sweet-acronym.ch)) to promote itself and its findings. Each consortium is responsible for its own domain name, with free choice of provider.

To respect the visual identity of the SWEET programme, the landing page of the consortium's website must be designed as shown in Figure 5 and fulfil to the criteria below. No template is provided. Existing consortium websites linked under [Overview of ongoing consortia](#) can also be used as examples. Good examples include the websites of the SWEET consortia [PATHFINDER](#) and [reFuel.ch](#).

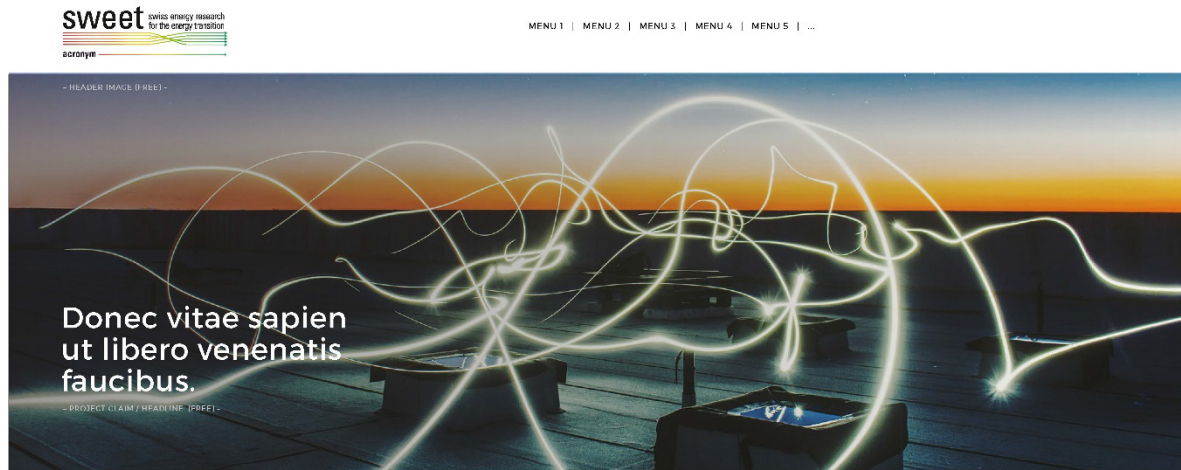
Criteria that must be met:

- Content:
  - Language: At least English and **one** national language, but ideally several.
  - Written acknowledgement of funding from SFOE, with display of the SFOE logo on the landing page (see Section 6.2).
  - Short description of the project portfolio on the landing page.
  - Inclusion of a disclaimer: "The content of this website reflects only the authors' views. The SFOE is not responsible for any use that may be made of the content." The placement of the disclaimer is determined by the consortium.
- Layout:
  - Use of the consortium-specific SWEET logo on the landing page and insertion of a link to SFOE's SWEET webpage.
  - White background.
  - Banner picture, chosen by the consortium, on the landing page.

#### 6.5 Templates

There are no SWEET PowerPoint or poster templates provided by SFOE. Slides and posters produced by the consortium should include the consortium-specific SWEET logo and acknowledge the support of the SFOE.

Templates provided by the SFOE for reports (e.g., for annual reports or deliverable reports) may only be used for this purpose, as they contain the SFOE logo and the Swiss coat of arms. They may be used for publication by the SFOE on Aramis but may not be used for other publications.



## Projekt

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Figure 5. Example of a website's landing page.

## 6.6 Formulations

Within the SWEET programme, certain terms and phrases must be used consistently. For example:

- Refer to yourself as a “SWEET consortium” instead of a “project”. SWEET consortia implement a portfolio of projects.
- A clear distinction must be made between the SWEET funding programme and the SWEET, SWEETER, and SOUR funding instruments.
- Refer to the consortium as “SWEET consortium *acronym*” or, where context allows, simply “*acronym*” (with *acronym* denoting the consortium’s acronym). Avoid hyphenated or compound forms such as “SWEET-*acronym*”. Example: “SWEET consortium PATHFNRD” or “PATHFNRD”, not “SWEET-PATHFNRD”.
- Words specified in guidelines, such as coordinator, member, collaboration partner, integration expert, KTT expert, etc.

## 6.7 Costs

It is important to distinguish between the costs of conducting research and the costs related to communicating and disseminating its results. Research activities themselves, as outlined in the proposals, are eligible for reimbursement through SWEET funding. However, communication and dissemination costs are eligible for reimbursement only if either no approval from the SFOE is required or if approval has been granted. If the SFOE does not grant approval, communication and dissemination costs cannot be reimbursed.