BBSRC Corporate Communications and Engagement Strategy

2015-2017

Securing a supportive environment to realise the potential of UK bioscience
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Background

1.1 The current Corporate Strategy for Communications, Engagement and Dialogue was agreed by BBSRC Executive Group in July 2012. It was developed over a period of months and included input and advice from EG, individual and collectively, and Council members with a broad range of sector experience in corporate communications and public engagement.

1.2 The strategy was disseminated across BBSRC office through internal communications channels and a ‘roadshow’ of group meetings.

1.3 The current strategy has achieved some significant success, including:

- Supporting major capital bid wins, in particular the £90M Pirbright DP2 funding.
- Positioning BBSRC as a strategically focused organisation with adoption of the first set of consistent corporate presentation materials and imagery. These have then been adapted when needed for specific audiences and messages, e.g. for 20th anniversary.
- Massive media exposure of BBSRC Science e.g. single stories getting a press readership of 3.5M and combined global web audience of 200M+
- Acknowledgement of BBSRC by partners and third parties (BIS communications, Science Media Centre, media) as a sector leader in communication and public engagement.
- BBSRC strategy making strengthened and endorsed through public dialogue e.g. Bioscience for Health, and embedded dialogue capability developed at institutes, e.g. Rothamsted dialogue on industry engagement.
- Driving a digital engagement approach that has allowed BBSRC to exploit new platforms to develop audience reach – and being acknowledged as a sector leader in this area e.g. ScoopIt Tumblr Twitter YouTube.
- Increased branding at institutes and major investments, including of National Capability Grants, sLoLas and the £130M+ BBSRC National Virology Centre (Pirbright DP1).

1.4 Earlier this year BBSRC carried out a major stakeholder benchmarking exercise which Council discussed at its last meeting and this strategy refresh is in part a response to the findings of the survey. A refresh is timely, reflecting changes in BBSRC approach and emphasis, a shifting external landscape, the rise of ‘new media’ and a further tightening of the competitive funding environment as we move towards the Election and the next CSR.

1.5 The refresh also draws on discussions with Executive Group, messaging input from the June 2014 Strategic Workshop and Council meeting, the July 2014 Executive Group Off Site meeting and informal consultation with a number of members of Council.

1.6 The first draft of this strategy was discussed with the Bioscience for Society Strategy Panel and at a BBSRC Council meeting, both in September 2014, and the views of both are reflected in the final version.
Strategic Aim

2.1 The strategy has a single overarching aim:

- To secure and maintain the best possible environment for the UK bioscience community to undertake research and to realise the potential of bioscience to deliver economic growth, wellbeing and improved quality of life in the UK and beyond.

This will be achieved through:

- Raising awareness of BBSRC, BBSRC research, its impact and relevance with the aim of creating advocates and supporters.
- Building and maintaining trust with stakeholders, including the public, by being open, transparent and by considering a diversity of views in strategic decision making.

2.2 The aim of this refreshed document is to provide an accessible and coherent framework to ensure that all BBSRC communications and interactions with external bodies and individuals support the above aim and approach. The corporate communications and engagement strategy provides a high level corporate framework; specific programmes, workstreams or initiatives may merit the development of their own strategies. These should complement, support and reinforce this document.

Context – Current Stakeholder Attitudes

3.1 This strategy is concerned with the management of BBSRC’s interactions with stakeholder groups and promoting mutual understanding and exchange. Corporate stakeholders are those individuals or groups that through direct or indirect action (or inaction) can influence the strategic aims of BBSRC. Some stakeholder groups which BBSRC will engage with will be narrow while others, such as the public, will be large and diverse.

3.2 There will be overlap between stakeholder groups that parts of BBSRC interact with on a daily ‘business as usual’ basis to deliver work programmes. In many cases the same individuals or groups may at one time be a ‘business partner’ or ‘customer’ and at another be a corporate stakeholder.

3.3 Current stakeholder attitudes can be gleaned from the 2014 BBSRC stakeholder benchmarking report – and from the wider public in the results of the regular BIS/Ipsos-MORI Public Attitudes to Science report.

3.4 There are a number of salient points to consider from the benchmarking report including:

- BBSRC’s 2014 stakeholder benchmarking survey highlighted high levels of familiarity across target corporate stakeholders and support for BBSRC’s work – 80% +.
- BBSRC was thought to have a strong reputation, was trusted and had established largely positive working relationships, almost 90% of respondents were willing to speak positively of the Council.
- 88% of stakeholders agreed UK bioscience is world-leading and 77% agreed BBSRC has had a significant role in achieving this.
• Stakeholders agree that the UK has a world-leading research base but identify threats to this, and are also unclear about the role of BBSRC in supporting this.

• There is a strong desire amongst many stakeholder groups, and particularly NGOs and policymakers, to work more closely with BBSRC.

• Understanding of BBSRC’s role in innovation and impact is not universally strong, particularly around social impacts.

3.5 Key aspects of the Public Attitudes to Science report 2014 (PAS) with relevance to BBSRC communications and engagement are:

• The UK public continue to see science as beneficial to society. Four-fifths (81%) agree that science will make people’s lives easier.

• Three-quarters of respondents (76%) think scientific research makes a direct contribution to economic growth in the UK, and nine-in-ten (91%) agree that young people’s interest in science is essential for our future prosperity.

• The public continue to support government funding of science. Eight-in-ten (79%) agree that, even if it brings no immediate benefits, scientific research which advances knowledge should be funded by the Government. Two-thirds (65%) also disagree that this funding should be cut because the money can be better spent elsewhere.

• 51% of the public want to hear and see more about science – especially directly from scientists.

• 69% of the public think that scientists should listen more to what ordinary people think.

• Trends in the report show that trust in scientists is increasing over time – but that in some cases this is ‘resigned’ trust (feel they have no option but to) – that support for the economic value of science is increasing (although still not high) and more people think the benefits of science outweigh any harmful effects.

• Some contentious topics, particular in the BBSRC remit, such as GM crops and the use of animals in research, attract lower levels of public support and show more entrenched views in the wider population, although are still generally positive.
Strategic Objectives and Targets

4.1 The following quantitative objectives are driven by the stakeholder benchmarking exercise, unless otherwise indicated, and will be measured through re-running the project in Spring 2016.

4.2 In addition in order to gain greater, shorter term insight into public views on UK bioscience and specific technologies, BBSRC will commission quick public polling via You Gov (or similar) at 6 monthly intervals. This will be structured to enable easy re-running at regular intervals and at short notice in light of major stories or events thus developing a longitudinal data set to measure BBSRC’s performance.

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<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Current position</th>
<th>Target by 2016/17 (or as otherwise stated)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policymakers</td>
<td>• Overall greater awareness of BBSRC as a research funder and familiarity with BBSRC mission, strategy and impact.</td>
<td>• 80% of identified stakeholders confirm familiarity with BBSRC mission and role in UK bioscience</td>
<td>• 90%+ of identified stakeholders confirm familiarity with BBSRC mission and role in UK bioscience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Value and support contribution and role of BBSRC in leading UK bioscience research sector and delivering economic and social benefits</td>
<td>• 77% of identified stakeholders understand value and impact of bioscience on UK economy and society</td>
<td>• 90%+ of identified stakeholders understand value and impact of bioscience on UK economy and society.</td>
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<td>• Value the contribution of BBSRC interventions in supporting a bioscience community that provides useful input to national policy objectives and policy development.</td>
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<td>• Support the development of a funding, policy and regulatory environment that supports the growth of the UK bioscience base, enhances UK’s international competitiveness in bioscience and maximises the opportunity for economic and societal benefits to be sustainably and equitably realised.</td>
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<td>• Sceptical individuals and groups are engaged and BBSRC able to identify and respond to negative perceptions.</td>
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<td>• Increase recognition of the role of bioscience, BBSRC and partners, in supporting overall prosperity and wellbeing (happiness).</td>
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| Partners    | • Strategic partners (HEIs, NGOs, associations etc.) feel their views are considered in BBSRC decision making  
• Strategic partners appreciate and value the contribution of BBSRC and BBSRC funded research to their interests and are motivated and supported to act as advocates of BBSRC.  
• Increase from 2014 base in number of strategically relevant civil society organisations or representatives (CSOs) engaged with BBSRC through contacts, meetings and formal interactions.  
• Ensure any CSOs with relevant interests in BBSRC activity are identified and feel able to engage with BBSRC and feel their views are considered.  
• Increase general stakeholder recognition of BBSRC productive relationships with CSOs. | • Current CSO interactions in all forms 20 (2014)  
• 33% of general stakeholders recognise BBSRC having good relationships with CSOs (agree/strongly agree that BBSRC has productive relationships with sector). | • Increase to 50 by end 2015 (to include meetings, joint projects and co-membership of panels as appropriate).  
• Majority of CSOs surveyed by 2016 report productive relationships with BBSRC.  
• Increase to 60% proportion of general stakeholders who recognise good BBSRC relationships with CSOs (agree/strongly agree that BBSRC has productive relationships with sector). |
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| Public (and civil society) |  • Have trust in UK bioscience to responsibly deliver social, economic and environment benefits.  
• Specifically trust BBSRC and UK bioscience in the appropriate, responsible and beneficial development of contentious technologies and methodologies and feel able to engage in a debate on their application.  
• Value bioscience and its contribution to and impact on modern life and are excited by the potential of bioscience in the future.  
• Specifically have increased level of awareness of pervasiveness of bioscience in daily life and potential of a bioscience based future economy.  
• Have increased level of awareness of potential of new bioscience technologies and their potential role in a sustainable future.  
• Have awareness of and value the role of BBSRC/public funding in bioscience research and impact and are supportive of continued public funding.  
• Are interested, motivated and feel able to critically engage in national conversations around bioscience, its potential benefits and limitations for society.  
• Recognise that BBSRC engages with, listens and responds to public views on bioscience and its application. | • Overall public support for science and bioscience related categories in the BIS/IPPOS-Mori Public Attitudes Survey is around 80%  
• Use BBSRC-specific polling to establish 2015 baseline of public views on UK bioscience and specific technologies | • Maintain or increase overall public support for science and bioscience related categories in the BIS/IPPOS-Mori Public Attitudes Survey at 80%  
• Increase respondents expressing support in BBSRC polling by 10% over 12 months  
• Increase BBSRC leadership understanding of public views and drivers of attitudes towards bioscience.  
• Increase respondents recognising BBSRC engagement with society by 10% in BBSRC polling over 12 months. |
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<td><strong>Research Community</strong></td>
<td>• Feel able to and are motivate to work in partnership with BBSRC to realise full potential of UK bioscience.</td>
<td>• Proportion of stakeholders that perceives a positive productive working relationship with the research community with BBSRC is 86%.</td>
<td>• Increase proportion of stakeholders that perceives a positive productive working relationship with the research community with BBSRC to at least 90%.</td>
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<td>• Support BBSRC activities to generate evidence and motivate advocacy for bioscience research and impact.</td>
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<td>• 80%+ of academic stakeholders to confirm they would speak highly of BBSRC unprompted.</td>
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<td>• Commit to wider public and stakeholder engagement to facilitate the responsible delivery of social and economic impact.</td>
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<td><strong>Industry (corporate stakeholders)</strong></td>
<td>• Industry partners feel their priorities and needs are considered in BBSRC decision making, appreciate and value the contribution of BBSRC and BBSRC funded research to their interests and are motivated and supported to act as advocates of BBSRC and to collaborate with and utilise bioscience research.</td>
<td>• 76% of identified target corporate industry stakeholders confirm familiarity with BBSRC and understanding is consistent across group.</td>
<td>• 90%+ of identified target corporate industry stakeholders confirm familiarity with BBSRC and understanding is consistent across group.</td>
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<td>• Industry partners should have consistently high levels of awareness of BBSRC, BBSRC’s mission and strategy and BBSRC’s role in and support for innovation.</td>
<td>• 75% of target corporate industry stakeholders are prepared and feel equipped to represent BBSRC and UK bioscience interests to policymakers and public if requested.</td>
<td>• 90%+ of target corporate industry stakeholders are prepared and feel equipped to represent BBSRC and UK bioscience interests to policymakers and public if requested.</td>
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<td>• 19% of industry stakeholders will speak highly of BBSRC unprompted.</td>
<td>• 40% of industry stakeholders to confirm they would speak highly of BBSRC unprompted.</td>
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<td>• Average 5.8 (out of 10) score from identified corporate industry stakeholders on degree to which BBSRC adds value to their organisation.</td>
<td>• Increase to average of 8 (out of 10) score from identified corporate industry stakeholders on degree to which BBSRC adds value to their organisation.</td>
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<td>• 60% of general stakeholders who perceive BBSRC has productive relationships with industry.</td>
<td>• Increase to 75% proportion of general stakeholders who perceive BBSRC has productive relationships with industry.</td>
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<td>• Corporate programmes to reflect Innovation sector engagement strategies.</td>
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BBSRC Narrative

5.1 The narrative provides a common basis and ethos to underpin corporate communications and engagement. An agreed narrative provides all colleagues with a common framing of BBSRC’s external outlook. The following paragraphs set out an underpinning narrative for BBSRC and provide the context for our key messages. It is deliberately written using personalised language.

Why bioscience? Why the UK? Why BBSRC?

5.2 Bioscience in the twenty-first century offers an opportunity for a more prosperous, healthier and sustainable society. It is the role of BBSRC to ensure that the UK is able to responsibly seize this opportunity to benefit all of society and that bioscience plays its role alongside other disciplines and in concert with public policy and society.

5.3 Bioscience will be a key underpinning element of the next generation of growth sectors in the global economy. Bioscience has made huge progress in the last 50 years, furthering our knowledge of how the natural world works and our place within it, and it now offers potential opportunities to transform the economy and improve wellbeing. These opportunities require BBSRC and the bioscience community to work with and to draw on the perspectives of other disciplines and partners across society and across national boundaries to realise their potential.

5.4 We believe that bioscience will be one of the most important drivers for the future of our economy and has a role in developing a sustainable and equitable bioeconomy in the coming decades. This will only be realised through a responsible and considered application of what bioscience promises, and by listening and reflecting on the needs and views of all sections of society and all parts of the economy. By playing its full role alongside other disciplines and within society, bioscience will help us to understand and support efforts to meet the serious challenges we face in the food system, the transition to a low carbon society and provide insights and therapies to promote lifelong wellbeing.

5.5 BBSRC invests in research, people, capabilities and infrastructure and we seek to lead the bioscience research sector in realising its potential. BBSRC supports innovation across many sectors and encourages the uptake of our science by society through funding and by actively identifying ways to catalyse impact from our research base.

5.6 BBSRC’s holistic support for the biosciences and commitment to a flexible range of approaches to deliver our mission has helped to build and maintain the UK’s leading position. We have a track record of delivering high impact, effective and efficient initiatives across our portfolio and remit, including innovative partnerships, an ability to identify and support new and emerging science areas and strong financial and project performance. We have demonstrably shaped UK bioscience to meet the challenges of modern global science and have ensured that a diversity of perspectives have been considered to enable the country to seize maximum benefit.

5.7 BBSRC is proud of the UK’s leading bioscience sector and believes that collaboration and partnership with the public, policymakers, industry and other users of our science is the route by which new ideas and discoveries can be shared and accelerated into beneficial application and impact. We foster links with industry, policymakers, the public and other users to ensure that our science is addressing the problems relevant to business and society and which will generate benefits. BBSRC seeks to create environments to foster collaboration and where bioscience enterprise can grow. We strive to open our science and our funded scientists
to industry, policymakers and anyone who can benefit from the knowledge we help to create.

5.9 Bioscience is a global endeavour. Many of the challenges that society faces are global in nature. BBSRC leads our community in building international connections and we also believe that by investing in the best ideas from the best scientists that we can keep the UK at the very forefront of global bioscience. By being at the forefront of bioscience we can ensure that the UK is the partner of choice for international partnerships and investment, bringing ideas, jobs, companies and, ultimately, products, processes, benefits and innovation to this country.

Messages

6.1 All corporate communications and engagement activities should incorporate a minimum of one strategic message, targeted towards appropriate stakeholder groups. The messages will help answer the key questions of why biosciences, why BBSRC and why the UK. The emphasis on each message and how it is deployed (which channel etc) will be dependent upon the strategic imperative and the audience i.e. messages to the academic community will not necessarily have the same emphasis as messages to the Treasury. If required there is a range of sub-messages for each strategic message to provide increased levels of nuance.

1. Through openness and engagement we ensure bioscience can deliver the promise of the bioeconomy for social and economic benefit
   - UK bioscience has a central role to play in growing a sustainable, balanced economy for the future and in meeting the social and environmental challenges of the coming decades and will do this in partnership with other disciplines, nations and all sections of society.
   - We realise the greatest benefits from bioscience by being open to different perspectives and by engaging and responding to the widest spectrum of stakeholders.
   - Realising the revolutionary potential of bioscience requires engagement with the diversity of society to ensure to make sure we are meeting society’s needs.
   - Engagement with the public enables bioscience to explore our relevance to society and help bioscience to meet societal challenges.

2. The potential of the bioeconomy offers great economic and social opportunities
   - The potential of bioscience in the 21st century is revolutionary. Bioscience, society and the economy is changing and, by working together, promises to bring benefits to the UK and beyond.
   - Bioscience is poised to underpin an economic transformation and the realisation of a sustainable and prosperous bioeconomy. The nature of this transformation and the full realisation of its potential demands responsibility and partnership with all of society.
   - Realising the potential of the bioscience revolution will require appropriate regulatory and investment landscapes and demands that bioscientists listen to society’s ambitions and concerns.
   - BBSRC drives bioscience innovation by working with industry, policymakers and society and by fostering collaboration between research users and our science community. BBSRC supports a joined up innovation environment by working with other funders and agencies.
   - Investing in bioscience research, and supporting capabilities and skills, now will enable to the UK to reap huge social and economic benefits in the future. Failure to invest will result in a widening gap with international competitors and permanent damage to the UK’s scientific base.
3. **Bioscience will help to meet future global challenges**
   - Bioscience can contribute to improving quality of life and to helping the world to meet the challenges of the coming decades.
   - Food security – helping the world to sustainably provide everyone with enough available and nutritious food.
   - Low carbon future – providing alternatives to fossil fuel based energy and by products by utilising the potential of plants and waste.
   - Maintaining health and wellbeing throughout life.
   - Bioscience will realise its potential as part of a multidisciplinary research base and through partnership with society, industry and policymakers.

4. **UK bioscience leads the world – and brings benefits to the UK**
   - The UK is a world-leader in bioscience research – fostering collaboration, catalysing innovation and attracting investment.
   - By many measures the UK bioscience research base is world-leading.
   - Having a world-leading research base attracts international collaboration, inward investment and partnership, and puts the UK at the forefront of access to new innovations, products and therapies.

5. **BBSRC leadership and investment is improving quality of life**
   - BBSRC has a unique and central role in leading, shaping and investing in the bioscience base to realise benefits for the nation.
   - BBSRC investment, intervention and leadership have built the UK bioscience base over decades and continues to ensure it is fit for the future.
   - BBSRC provides the long-term, strategic vision and funding that drives the best frontier bioscience and ensures leading bioscientists are tackling the biggest challenges faced by industry and society.
   - BBSRC seeks to engage and inspire the next generation of citizens and scientists and ensure society and the economy has access to the right skills for the future.

6. **Frontier bioscience will change our world with future discoveries**
   - Investment in frontier bioscience is maintaining UK leadership in global bioscience and ensuring we can benefit from future discoveries.
   - By investing to ensure that future discoveries in bioscience happen in the UK we are ensuring that UK is the first to benefit from products, innovations and therapies.

**Implementation**

7.1 This strategy provides a framework and set of objectives. BBSRC will target communications and engagement tactics specifically at identified audiences to support identified desired outcomes.

7.2 Tactical delivery plans across the main communications channels and initiatives will be developed to guide organisational activity and will follow fundamental principles of:

- Delivery led through the External Relations Unit as a professional ‘centre’ working in collaboration with and supporting the activities of the entire organisation, community and industry partners.
- Maintenance of developed channels and programmes as outlined in the full 2012 strategy, including media relations, website, corporate events programme and commitment to strategic dialogue.
- Openness and transparency in all BBSRC activities and programmes and a willingness to engage and respond to all viewpoints.
- Targeting and tailoring of channels and mechanisms to meet audience needs and
- Leveraging previous ‘investment’ to increase effectiveness and reach, specifically through building long-term relationships with consumer media and developing social media platforms.

- Working across RCUK to deliver effective and efficient communications and engagement programmes and capabilities that are mutually beneficial to BBSRC, other Councils and the wider research base.

- Develop and strengthen partnership approaches to delivering communications and engagement objectives, including through existing and new relationships with the Institutes, Society of Biology, Science Media Centre, Natural History Museum and Forum for the Future.

7.3 All activities and channels and their outcomes are in support of BBSRC’s desired outcomes – essentially the aims in section 2.

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<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Strategic driver</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Development of comprehensive openness implementation plan for BBSRC.</td>
<td>• Increases effectiveness of BBSRC decision making by increasing diversity of views received.</td>
<td>• BBSRC to have a predisposition to putting information in the public domain, including details on how decision have been reached and which stakeholders were consulted as part of this</td>
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<td>• Increase trust in BBSRC by opening processes to greater involvement and scrutiny.</td>
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<td>Public engagement and societal insight</td>
<td>Maintain strong programme of public engagement to ensure diversity of public and other stakeholder views considered in strategic decision making and BBSRC positioning</td>
<td>• Increases effectiveness of BBSRC decision making by increasing diversity of views received.</td>
<td>• Support research community through training and awareness – maintain current level of public engagement training.</td>
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<td>Maintain activity to embed engagement and dialogue in major investments and research community</td>
<td>• Ensures BBSRC decisions and positions consider wider public views</td>
<td>• Support strategically funded institutes to build dialogue capacity through at least one programme a year and through sharing of best practice.</td>
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<td>• Supports maintenance of trust between BBSRC and public</td>
<td>• Lead strategic dialogue and public engagement for the GFS programme, including establishment of a public panel.</td>
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<td>• Support research community through training and awareness – maintain current level of public engagement training.</td>
<td>• Run a topic led strategic dialogue activity (such as BBUH 2012, FNH 2014) on a BBSRC strategic area once a year (assuming appropriate decision point reached).</td>
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<td>• Explore potential innovative mechanisms to understand drivers of public attitudes towards bioscience, for example by building on the GFS public panel and through discussion with other RCs</td>
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<td>Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic messaging</strong></td>
<td>Internal narrative and lines to take</td>
<td>• Increases effectiveness and impact of BBSRC messaging.</td>
<td>• Agreement of internal lines and adoption across office by December 2014.</td>
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<td>• Shared with Council via CouncilNet and continuously updated.</td>
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<td>Increased emphasis on the role of BBSRC and BBSRC interventions in communications activities</td>
<td>• Stakeholder survey showed lack of awareness of BBSRC’s role in UK’s world leading position and in impact.</td>
<td>• Clear statement in communications, case studies etc of how BBSRC affected the outcome of a project.</td>
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<td>Evolution of brand post-20th anniversary and rigorous compliance</td>
<td>20th anniversary to corporate branding.</td>
<td>• Evolved branding guidelines and materials agreed and ready by Jan 2015.</td>
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<td>Sharing of messaging and branding with Council, NIBs and strategic partners</td>
<td>• Without impinging on academic freedoms – alignment from other bodies with BBSRC messages increases impact with stakeholders</td>
<td>• All BBSRC investments over £1M (research, infrastructure etc.) carries clear BBSRC branding in naming and signage from January 2015.</td>
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<td>• Branding and naming requirements to be written into funding T&amp;Cs</td>
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<td>• All new grantholders receive brand and communications services guidance from January 2015.</td>
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<td>• All external communications compliant with prevailing brand guidelines – Immediate.</td>
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<td>Nominated corporate spokespeople using assertive corporate briefing to provide BBSRC commentary.</td>
<td>• Focused 2-3 spokespeople allows BBSRC to build around a known identity and provide reliable comment.</td>
<td>• Increased use of media and presentation training by key EG members.</td>
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<td>• Increased use of trained EG members to act as BBSRC commentators</td>
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<td>• Increased profile for BBSRC in media, speaker opportunities etc.</td>
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| Strategic communications and engagement themes | • Value of plant science (Jan 2015-Sept 2015)  
• Potential of the bioeconomy (2015) | • Provides focus, prioritisation and critical mass to BBSRC communications and engagement.  
• Tailored to support organisational strategic outcomes  
• Provides opportunities to engage partners, build advocacy and amplify messages | • Specific delivery plan for each new theme agreed by start dates with theme objectives.  
• Increased awareness of BBSRC and BBSRC mission from target audiences. |

Policy engagement | Increased 1:1 meetings – link up between ERU materials and policy horizon scanning with CE’s office and CPSG. | • CE has increased 1:1 meetings with policy stakeholders since Oct 2013.  
• Feedback from ongoing meetings will be recorded with ERU and linked with ERU policy horizon scanning to inform corporate communications and future briefings. | • Increased awareness and understanding of BBSRC and BBSRC mission and impact amongst target policy stakeholders. |

| Development and maintenance of facts and figures evidence base on key sectors – including future growth potential | • Required to underpin communications and engagement messages.  
• Consistent use of facts and figures increases impact of messages. | • Agreed and adopted consistently across BBSRC by Jan 2015. |

| Production of corporate materials to target policy stakeholders, particularly using economic data | • Communications products required to support meetings with policy stakeholders. | • Suitable materials developed to meet audience expectations by Feb 2015. |

<p>| Target policy stakeholders for attendance at wider corporate events where messaging is appropriate. | • Opportunity for policy stakeholders to receive strategic messages and advocacy. | • Increase policy stakeholder attendance at appropriate events by 20% by Sept 2015. |</p>
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| Corporate stakeholder engagement              | Maintain balanced programme of corporate events across science strategy priorities and industry sectors. To include: Cereals, NFU, OFC, BIA dinner, annual corporate stakeholder receptions | • Corporate engagement programme raises awareness                                 | • Increase positive awareness of BBSRC from event attendees.  
• Evaluate each event against detailed objectives to ensure vfm.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Ensure ongoing monitoring of BBSRC stakeholder ‘map’ |                                                                            | • Ensures BBSRC is engaging with and responding to all stakeholders with an interest in organisational activities | • Draw on expertise and perspectives of strategy panels to develop map – with particular emphasis on unknown stakeholder groups.                                                                                                                                |
| Continue BBSRC ‘Business’                     |                                                                            | • Business provides an additional channel to reach high-level stakeholder targets with corporate content. | • Increased stakeholder awareness of BBSRC investments and impact  
• Full evaluation of effectiveness of ‘Business’ by late 2015.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Joint working across RCUK and bilaterally with RCs | Support for RCUK ‘research, innovate, grow’ work streams  
Work with other Research Councils to strengthen collective strategic communications in support of the UK research base. | • Supporting wider research base campaign.  
• Collaborative working on common interests demonstrates RC ability and willingness to work together. | • BBSRC to include the RCUK messaging in own activities and messages, including policy engagement meetings and events.  
• BBSRC to contribute resource and expertise to collective activities and to support CSAN as a strategic forum.                                                                                                                                 |
| Minimum of two major initiatives or events with 1 or more other RCs |                                                                            | • Collaborative working on common interests demonstrates RC ability and willingness to work together.  
• Increases impact and efficacy of communications. | • Joint ‘big data’ campaign at AAAS 2015 with STFC and other UK science bodies (Feb 2015)  
• Collaboration with SFA, STFC and RCUK on national theme on science careers (2015)  
• Joint event and comms work with Rainbow Seed Fund, STFC and NERC  
• Work with NERC to increase joint strategic messaging to agricultural communities exploiting Year of Soils in 2015.  
• Active contribution to RCUK Research, Innovate, Grow event in July 2015 |
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| Digital Communications | Growth in use of individual use of social media to support corporate objectives | • Allows stakeholders to engage on a targeted basis.  
• Increases openness of BBSRC staff, processes and decisions to wider audience | • Increase by 20% number of individual tweeters identifiably supporting corporate engagement on October 2014 numbers.  
• Grow BBSRC corporate Twitter base by 15% by Oct 2015 on Oct 2014 numbers.  
• Introduce guidelines for corporate and individual staff use of Twitter/LinkedIn etc. to promote integrated promotion of initiatives  
• Identify effective integrated social media evaluation tools and recommend for implementation by April 2015. |
| Maintain and grow existing digital platforms to meet user needs | Tailors communications channels towards user needs and preferences. | Transition to common navigation framework and MURA cross-RC platform by April 2015.  
• Continue to grow Tumblr follower base to 20,000 (from 12,000 Sept 2014) by Oct 2015.  
• All suitable BBSRC news stories to have integrated social media objectives and plan from Jan 2015. |
| Develop and pilot news channels through digital, for example use of buzzfeed | Tailors communications channels towards user needs and preferences. | Minimum of 2 buzzfeed pilots per month Jan-April 2015 before evaluation checkpoint.  
• Revised online video plan developed by end of Jan 2015. |

Focus online video to ensure effectiveness and return on investment/effort. Focus on shorter, high impact videos and revealing scientist perspectives.
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| Media relations | Increase consumer and general media engagement | • Meets desire in PAS survey that public want to hear more about science.  
• Allows BBSRC science to reach audiences not self-selecting for science interest. | • 20% increased coverage of BBSRC science and strategic messages in non-science specialist outlets by Oct 2015. |
| | Develop news stories with viral, social media and collation | • Meets desire in PAS survey that public want to hear more about science.  
• Allows BBSRC science to reach audiences not self-selecting for science interest. | • Increased BBSRC story coverage through non-traditional channels, such as BuzzFeed  
• Incorporate integrated online objective setting and evaluation for news stories by end of Jan 2015. |
| Science Communication | Maintain broad science communication strand to inspire and excite the public with bioscience and its potential Schools engagement programme maintained to facilitate interaction between researchers, teachers and young people | • Meets desire in PAS survey that public want to hear more about science.  
• Supports increasing public interaction with bioscience and ability to engage in constructive debate about future direction and potential.  
• Supports public interaction with bioscience and development of bioscience aware society. Support scientist interaction with wider society and consideration of wider perspectives. | • Develop the legacy of the Great British Bioscience Festival with forward plan developed by April 2015.  
• Develop public facing science communications strands as part of the strategic themes – starting with plant science from Jan 2015.  
• Build on work of Young Scientist Coordinator programme and the SRC cohort by maintaining bioscience specific schools resources and enrichment programme in discussion with other RCs |
Evaluation

8.1 Within two years we will re-run the corporate stakeholder benchmarking exercise to gauge the movement in stakeholder attitudes towards BBSRC especially in relation to the targets set out in Section 4 above. This will also explore stakeholder appreciation of BBSRC’s openness and if they feel able to contribute to decision making.

8.2 ERU will develop and maintain a stakeholder attitudes log and work closely with the CE’s office and EG to ‘harvest’ stakeholder opinions and views following meetings and other interactions. This will also be able to record intelligence from other parts of the BBSRC family, including NIBs, Council etc.

8.3 We will continue to monitor public attitudes to science through the annual BIS/MORI Public Attitudes to Science survey but this will be strengthened by the commissioning of a BBSRC-specific survey on public attitudes towards bioscience and specific bioscience technologies. This will be designed to be short and easy to re-run at regular intervals to provide longitudinal data.

8.4 Each individual corporate communications and engagement activity will be evaluated against specific objectives set ahead of any activity commencing. Objectives will include message penetration, audience reach, audience feedback metrics, target audience attendance, stakeholder feedback etc. These objectives will outline how an activity supports the delivery of one or more strategic objectives and long-term BBSRC outcomes. This is in line with Cabinet Office GCS expectations and best practice and will use the GCS Performance Framework.