



Scuola Normale Superiore Communication plan 2023-2024

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Communication of the Scuola Normale Superiore – Organisation

The Mission of the Scuola Normale Superiore

The **Scuola Normale Superiore** is a special-status university research and higher education institution with a special organisation aiming to promote the development of **culture, teaching and research** in the fields of mathematical, natural and political sciences and the humanities, by exploring their interconnections and potential for development, also in the context of the **Third Mission**.

The Scuola Normale singles out and cultivates the **talent** of its students, guaranteeing teaching that develops individual skills in a context of coexistence, dialogue and collaboration. Dozens of girls and boys are selected every year, through **a competition**, on the sole basis of **merit**. On entering the Normale, they are hosted **free of charge** in the colleges; they live and work together, interacting with scholars of different ages, origins and backgrounds; they start early to engage in research, and are encouraged to gain experience at other universities and research institutions, in Italy and abroad, and to plan and try out public engagement activities. The **wealth of experience** gained at the Normale brings its students in contact with the working context, including that outside the academic world, in an original and incisive way.

Scientific, technological and cultural challenges find a fertile, open and stimulating environment at the Normale, where critical knowledge, scientific rigour, intellectual curiosity and the ability for dialogue are developed. The high level of training, the innovativeness of the research and the interaction with society are the constitutive values of its **identity**.

With these assumptions, the Normale places itself at the **service of society**, to contribute to the development of our country and of Europe, forming citizens who are aware and prepared to face the complexities of the present and to plan for a more **equitable, sustainable and inclusive future**.

The role of communication

Communication has the task of protecting and strengthening the **image** of the Normale, strengthening its **reputation** and promoting its **activities** and numerous **results** in the fields of teaching, research and the Third Mission. Hence:

- It highlights scientific rigour, innovative **research, a collaborative environment**, the special nature of **collegial life**, the contribution of all its components to the excellence of the institution, the commitment, the ability and the **results** achieved by its **community**, made up of students, lecturers, research and technical-administrative staff, collaborators and alumni.
- It underlines the founding **mission** of the Normale to cultivate a conscious and informed citizenship, and its driving principle of **service to society**.

- It develops **strategic communications**, together with content and campaigns that support the Normale's priority goals and that address economic, social and cultural **challenges**.
- It manages and enhances the **value of the SNS brand** through a solid foundation of the brand and a system of consistent visual identity.
- It develops **multichannel communication** strategies that explore the potential, languages and targets of the various media.

The target audience

The communication of the Normale addresses the interests and needs of various stakeholders:

- The **community** of the Normale, in its various components (students, teaching, research and technical-administrative staff).
- **Potential students** from Italy and abroad.
- The **families** of current and potential students.
- **Educational institutions**.
- The **citizenry**.
- The **media**.
- The **teaching and research staff** of other higher education and research institutions in Italy and abroad.
- Its **alumni**.
- **Businesses** and private **individuals**.
- **Public and private organisations** and bodies, including international ones.

The reference structure

The **Communications Office**, staffed by the Management, oversees all activities that have a direct impact on the image and brand of the Scuola Normale and on the quality of internal and external communication.

In particular:

- It identifies, designs, proposes and implements the **communication strategies of the SNS**.
- It deals with **institutional communication** in interaction with Management, Collegial Authorities, teaching and scientific structures and administration offices, with a view to centralised coordination of all external communication activities.
- It designs, manages, protects and promotes the **corporate identity** and the brand of the SNS.
- It takes care of the **graphic design**, the creation and dissemination of press and web communication materials and the institutional stationery.
- It manages the contents of the institutional **websites** (sns.it, Alla Enne, NormaleNews, AmministrazioneTrasparente) and coordinates their widespread dissemination.
- It manages the institutional **social media channels** of the Normale.
- It draws up **guidelines** for the image and content of websites and social media channels managed by other structures or by individuals belonging to the SNS that directly or indirectly convey the image of the SNS.
- It designs and produces promotional **video materials** for the Scuola Normale.
- It takes care of **post-production** and publication on the SNS's social media channels of the filming of events and conferences, of the audio/video materials deriving from them and of promotional videos of the SNS's activities.
- It manages relations with the national and international **press**, news to the media of the activities of the Scuola Normale, the newspaper NormaleNews and the daily press review.
- It carries out **translations** into and from English of institutional communication materials, news and regulatory sources.

The **tools** through which the communication of the Normale is articulated are:

- Institutional **websites**, as well as those related to the structures of the SNS.
- The SNS **social media channels** ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#)).
- Relations with **traditional media**.
- **Direct promotion** materials.

The qualitative impact

If the plan outlined below is successfully implemented, the Normale will be best known for:

- Recruiting **the brightest and most meritorious students**, regardless of their economic, social, geographical and cultural backgrounds.
- Attracting and retaining the best national and international **scholars**.
- Conducting **innovative research**.
- Offering to students and research staff excellent **services, structures and skills**.
- Attracting public and private **funding**.
- Being **integrated with and connected to its surrounding territory** and increasing its prestige.
- Constituting a spearhead in the **production and transfer of knowledge** and an authoritative source of **scientific dissemination**.
- Being an **inclusive**, welcoming and supportive community.
- Contributing to the **economic, social and cultural development of our country and of Europe**.

All this will arouse the keen interest of the main stakeholders and the pride of its community.

Communication of the Scuola Normale Superiore - Objectives

The Communication Plan takes on board the main challenges faced by **the Programmatic Development Plan** (PPS) and incorporates the indications of **the Positive Action Plan** (PAP), the **Gender Equality Plan** (GEP), the **Performance Plan** and the recommendations suggested by the report of the **Commission of Expert Assessors** of 14/04/2021, in order to transform the institutional objectives into communicative actions; in addition, it pursues further objectives that are specific to work aimed at the areas of communication, content production, reputation and brand management.

In the next two years, the entire community of the Normale will be called upon to contribute to the implementation of this Plan: without the collaboration of all those who live within the Normale, any narrative will be ineffective and contrived. The Communications Office will be responsible for planning, coordinating, distributing, producing and measuring the actions in support of the objectives identified, guaranteeing support, quality, competence and effectiveness to the entire SNS community; the latter will be informed of and involved in the strategies developed, and will be expected to provide active support for the work plan. The achievement of the objectives will be verified by the Central Web Editorial Staff, chaired by the Director of the Scuola Normale, who will monitor the progress of the actions, identifying any corrective measures to be taken.

Institutional objectives

- A. The recruiting of students

- B. Visibility and international attractiveness
- C. Knowledge transfer: economic, social and cultural impact
- D. Inclusiveness, overcoming the gender gap, social mobility
- E. Internal communication

The specific objectives of communication

- F. Community involvement
- G. The strengthening of visual identity
- H. The expansion of the virtual community

The identified actions, although distinct for single objectives, are actually functional to the realisation of many of these at the same time, as highlighted in the text.

Institutional objectives

Objective A - Recruitment of students

The educational model proposed by the Scuola Normale and the services and opportunities offered to both undergraduate and PhD students are among its strengths and constitute a fundamental element of attraction for the recruitment of students.

The Programmatic Development Plan identifies, in **Objective 1**, the need to review the planning and administrative management of teaching and services, and to strengthen their effectiveness: planning and provision of teaching, tutoring and mentoring activities, counselling services, mobility and research periods and placement services are the priority areas of intervention, aimed at giving a new centrality to collegial life and to the students' educational experience, also in a broader sense.

Objective 2 of the PPS, on the other hand, focuses on doctoral training and the need to review the organisation of courses to increase the attractiveness of the teaching syllabus in an international context, to promote interdisciplinarity and transversal research projects.

Keywords: services, teaching, international, collegial life, community

Actions (also functional to objectives B, C and D)

Narration (traditional and social media) : constructing a narrative of collegial life, places, structures, services, teaching (undergraduate and PhD courses), using the **direct narration** of students and lecturers and portraits of the people who make up the Scuola Normale community, increasing the social section **#chifalaNormale**. Involving alumni (social section **#sempernormalista**). Using **infographics** to show the nature of the Normale, how it works (admission, teaching, college life, infrastructures) and its special characteristics (social section: **#èNormale**)

Direct promotion : developing a **set of promotional materials and videos** (IT/ENG) to be used on the occasion of orientation courses, orientation exhibitions, fairs, festivals (BRIGHT NIGHT, Internet Festival...), lessons in schools, internships, academic Olympics,

competitions, summer schools, refresher courses for teachers and welcoming ceremonies.

Objective B - International visibility and attractiveness

The Scuola Normale intends to increase its visibility, reputation and international attractiveness, strengthening the actions implemented to promote the mobility abroad of lecturers, researchers and students (outgoing) and implementing visiting positions (incoming), in accordance with **Objective 4** of the PPS and the recommendations suggested by the report of the Commission of Expert Assessors of 14/04/2021. It is also strengthening the existing networking channels and creating new ones, through partnerships that constitute a privileged space for participation in European or international funding calls (**Objective 6** of the PPS).

Keywords: mobility, networking, international

Actions (also functional to objective A)

Narration (traditional and social media) : inclusion in the narration of **initiatives, projects and people** involved in the main networks of which the Scuola Normale is part (EELISA, New European Bauhaus, TraPoCo, SAR); actively involving the visiting professors, but also alumni, through **testimonies and interviews**.

Channels: enhancement of the activities on the **LinkedIn page** of the Scuola Normale, in addition to content on technology transfer. LinkedIn, in fact, is expanding its profiling (originally corporate and therefore, until recently, more suitable for promoting KT-related initiatives as a priority), especially in the international arena. In this sense, it will also be necessary to adopt **bilingual communication** on LinkedIn, already active on the SNS Instagram page. The activation of relations with **Italian Cultural Institutes** to agree on promotions of the Normale on their social media channels.

Objective C - Knowledge transfer: economic, social and cultural impact

The Programmatic Development Plan recognises the need to develop, strengthen and consolidate the Third Mission activities of the Scuola Normale, both in the field of research enhancement (**Objective 6** and **Objective 7** of the PPS) and in that of public engagement and the production of public goods (**Objective 8** of the PPS). The communication relating to the MUR PRO3 and PNRR calls is also part of this context. Communication must be able to highlight the wealth of knowledge produced at the Normale, engaging in a coordinated, modulated, effective, multi-channel narrative of research projects and their results, technology transfer initiatives, knowledge, in a broad sense, and cultural promotion. Lecturers, researchers, students and technical-administrative personnel are called upon to actively participate in this narrative, contributing with their own voices to the construction of an impactful communication. Furthermore, both Horizon Europe and national funding require research staff to be able to structure a communication plan and to be able to tell of their research to a wide and varied non-academic audience. Scientific communication thus becomes an integral part

of the work of researchers and an essential aspect of every project, from its conception to its conclusion.

Keywords: research, culture, knowledge transfer, community, impact, engagement

Actions (also functional to objectives B and F)

Narration : involving research staff to talk about the value and attractiveness of their studies and the results they have achieved, technology transfer initiatives, projects, seeking - where possible - to create links with current and wide-ranging themes.

Channels : strengthening the section of **the institutional website** dedicated to research, identifying a suitable way to adequately represent research groups and projects (IRIS RM); consolidating the **Alla Enne portal** to enhance cultural events and research communication; increasing the actions on the **LinkedIn** and **Twitter pages** of the Scuola Normale (increasingly accredited in the international scientific community) (with the experimentation of bilingualism on both channels) as privileged channels for promoting research enhancement initiatives, including open science.

Tools: The provision of essential **guidelines** and support for the development of communication plans for national and European projects.

Objective D - Inclusiveness, overcoming the gender gap, social mobility

The Scuola Normale is an academic environment with a distinct male prevalence, whose students mostly have a medium-high social and cultural background. As highlighted in **Objective 3** of the PPS, at the Scuola Normale the number of female students - and candidates for entrance exams - is considerably lower than that of male students, especially in the Faculty of Sciences. The gender gap therefore represents an element on which to reflect in order to deploy different actions so that the environment of the Scuola Normale is, and is perceived as being, inclusive and capable of welcoming and enhancing differences, including that of gender.

The communicative objectives and actions in the Gender Equality Plan of the Scuola Normale are drawn up with the above considerations in mind, which this Communication Plan incorporates and makes its own. The Normale also intends to enhance its function as a social elevator, in the full awareness that in the course of education, the process starts well before university studies, and the talent and potential of boys and girls, in order to develop, need to be identified and cultivated from childhood. In this sense, the relationship with schools, both through training courses for teachers and directly with the classes, is strategically crucial.

Keywords: gender gap, inclusiveness, social mobility, lifelong education

Actions (also functional to Objective A)

Narration: enhancement of the initiatives developed by the Scuola Normale for the **fight against discrimination and gender violence**, for the **promotion of psychological well-being** and inclusion, and in support of the **work/family life balance** (GEP, Anti -violence help desk, CGCE and Confidential Counsellor, Counselling, PAP). Support with strategic and coordinated communication actions for the various initiatives of the Normale

dedicated to schools (refresher courses for teachers, *Normale a scuola* (Normale at school), Orientation, the ISPIRA project...). The use of **inclusive visual and verbal language** that includes and represents all gender identities. Emphasis on the free services offered by the Scuola Normale and career opportunities, including non-academic ones, involving alumni.

Objective E - Internal communication

In order for them to be effective and efficient, all the services and opportunities offered by the Scuola Normale to its community - including educational programming, funding calls for research, cultural activities, positive actions in favour of well-being in the workplace and work/family life balance, opportunities for mobility, the counselling service, interlibrary loans, the daily canteen menu, strategies for economic sustainability and quality assurance processes (**Objectives 9 and 10** of the PPS) - as well as regulations and strategic guidelines - call for careful and widespread communication that contributes to creating an informed, aware and participatory environment. In a small community such as that of the Scuola Normale, word of mouth and custom can partially make up for the deficiencies of structured communication, but they cannot and must not replace it. Information must be organised in a clear way, have precise senders and recipients, a consistent language and tone of voice, and differentiated channels based on the target.

Keywords: information, consistency, effectiveness, community

Actions:

Management: Analysis of the **information flows** to identify and clarify the senders of internal communications, who must coincide with the structures that manage the activities, actions and information communicated.

Narration: the development of short **guidelines** that give clear indications on language, tone of voice and visual identity in accordance with the types of internal communication (calls, newsletters, decrees, notices, emails ...).

Channels: the identification of adequate and effective channels for types of action; activation of a **Telegram profile** of the Scuola Normale, accessible only to the community (private channels), as a pilot activity to experience greater interaction with students (topics: teaching, EELISA).

The objectives of communication

Objective F - Involvement of the community

The communication actions envisaged by the Plan herein require the active and conscious participation of every member of the community of the SNS. Lecturers, researchers, students, technical and administrative personnel, collaborators and alumni are called upon to contribute to the narration that the Normale weaves through the various institutional communication channels activated, so that the narration is complete

and effective.

Participating in the narrative process means understanding the importance of the contribution of the individual to the institutional communicative impact, within the framework of a coordinated and shared strategy, and developing the basic skills necessary to move easily in the context.

Keywords: community, impact, engagement

Actions (also functional to objectives A, B, C, D and G)

Awareness raising and training: activating **training courses** in research communication for students, researchers and technical and administrative personnel.

Tools: Strengthening the **set of tools useful for communicating** the research and activities of the Scuola Normale available to the community (photo archives, presentation and poster templates, video archives, leaflets...) in order to maintain a consistent visual identity and tone of voice.

Objective G - Strengthening of visual identity

A well-defined basic brand structure, a clear picture of contexts, processes and tools, and a solid and consistent visual identity system are the fundamental elements of good communication. Since its establishment, in the organisation chart referred to from 1 March 2021, the Communications Office has undertaken to define these basic aspects through the drafting of communication guidelines, social media policy and principles of visual identity. This last element requires a further effort of systematisation. Over the next two years, the visual identity of the Scuola Normale will be consolidated in order for it to be applied consistently to the entire communication system, so as to guarantee brand awareness and incisiveness.

An essential part of the visual identity is a large, varied and updated catalogue of images of the SNS, to be used in digital communication and direct promotion materials, and for the traditional media. The last photographic campaign commissioned by the Normale dates back to 2018; in recent years it has been widely exploited, making a new intervention necessary.

Keywords: brand identity, corporate identity, impact

Actions (also functional to objectives A, E and F)

Branding : Redefining and strengthening of the **corporate identity** (stationery, direct promotion materials, digital visuals, graphic design of social media channels ...) and a review of the production process of communication materials. The designing and creating of a new **photographic campaign**.

Objective H - Enlargement of the virtual community

Digital **communication makes** it possible to reach a wide and diversified audience, allows for content to be modified, reused and scaled, adapting it to different web contexts, and favours sharing and interaction. For many years the Scuola Normale has managed

institutional communication also through the recently renovated website and oversees the main social media, in the awareness that these are fundamental channels of information, promotion and engagement. The creation of the new Alla Enne website dedicated to the promotion of video content produced by the Scuola Normale and intended for a non-specialist public, and the promotion strategies developed for the occasion, move towards an affirmation of the Scuola Normale in the panorama of the dissemination of cultural content on the web.

To fully exploit the communicative potential of the web and to be able to create a vast virtual community, it is necessary to know in depth the principles, rules and tools of the context, in order to develop an adequate strategic planning of one's presence on the web.

Keywords: knowledge transfer, SEO, Data Analysis, community, impact.

Actions (also functional to objectives B and C)

Channels: The implementing of **Alla Enne**, also creating *ad hoc* content for the platform and usable on social media (video pills for Instagram). A redefinition of the languages and special characteristics of the Scuola Normale profile on the various social media in relation to properties and targets.

Training: the setting up of a **periodic updating system** for the staff assigned to social media management and the distributed web editing of institutional sites.

Management: the processing and publishing of the **data analysis** of institutional websites and social media channels. Investing in **paid promotions** on Meta and GoogleAds (YouTube).

The quantitative impact (objectives, actions, indicators, targets)

TARGETS	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	TARGET
A. Recruitment of students	A1. Representation of services through the community (#chifalaNormale)	Number of #chifalaNormale posts	1 post per week
	A2. Greater involvement of alumni (#sempernormalista)	Number of #sempernormalista posts	1 post per month
	A3. Creating the social section #èNormale	Number of #èNormale posts	1 post per month
	A4. Production of new promotional materials	Number of new materials	1 promotional video (long version + trailer for social media) IT subt ENG

			1 IT/ENG leaflet
B. Visibility and international attractiveness	B1. Enhancement of LinkedIn page + A1, A2, A3, A4 actions	Number of posts	2 posts per week IT/ENG
C. Transfer of knowledge: economic, social and cultural impact	C1. Strengthening of the Research section (research groups) of sns.it	Research Groups Section	Implementation of the section dedicated to Research Groups on sns.it through the use of IRIS RM
	C2. Twitter boost + action B1	Twitter bilingualism	Selection of posts also published in ENG and focus on <i>open science</i>
	C3. Support to research staff for the development of communication plans for national and European projects	Model for the preparation of communication plans for national and European projects	Drafting of the communication plan model
D. Inclusiveness, overcoming the gender gap, social mobility	D1. Raising awareness on the issue of gender equality	Internal and external campaigns on gender equality	1 internal campaign + 1 external campaign
E. Internal communication	E1. Systematisation of internal communication	Analysis and enhancement of information flows	Organisation of internal communication flows
	E2. Strengthening of communication with students	SNS Telegram profile	Activation of private SNS Telegram pilot channels for communications on Didattica and EELISA
	E3. Consistency of the image (verbal and visual) of internal communication	Definition of corporate identity for internal communication	Brief guidelines on language, tone of voice and visual identity for the types of internal communication (calls, newsletters, decrees, information, emails ...)
F. Community involvement	F1. Training in research communication for the SNS community	Number of training courses activated	1 annual training course, differentiated by target (undergraduate students/PhDs and research staff/technical and administrative personnel involved)

	F2. Enhancement of the set of tools useful for communicating the research and activities of the Scuola Normale, available to the community + G1 and G2 actions	Revision and increase of the set of tools (separate photo archives by topic, presentation and poster templates, video archives, leaflets)	Redefinition and enhancement of the tools available; sharing on Drive for the SNS community
G. Strengthening of visual identity	G1. Definition and improvement of the corporate identity	Revision of the corporate identity	Coordinated redefinition of stationery, direct promotion materials, digital visuals, graphic design of social media channels
	G2. Updating of the photographic archive of the Normale	Photographic campaign	Design and implementation of a new photographic campaign
H. Expansion of the virtual community	H1. Implementation of the "Alla Enne" digital platform	Creation of video pills to promote on social media channels	2 video pills per month
	H2. Social management training	Training and periodic updating of the staff who manage the institutional and structure social media channels	1 refresher course per year
	H3. Data Analysis	Analysis report of access and behaviour data on websites and social media channels	Drafting of half-yearly reports