



**FRAMEWORK**

Centre communication

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# Framework for centre communication

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## 1 Introduction

Competence centres are a significant part of KTH's research activities and the way KTH primarily conducts research together with partners from industry, the public sector and other higher education institutions. A centre develops knowledge and research areas that require new, interdisciplinary approaches. KTH has between 50 to 60 centres, each linked to one of KTH's five schools (host school).

New centres are started upon the initiative of KTH or external parties based on a scientific, industrial and/or societal need, and are active for a fixed period. KTH's President decides on new centres, which then function as individual organisations with their own steering groups, budgets and operational objectives. At the end of the period, the centre can apply for new funding to continue its activities. For more information on the legal status and regulation of centres, see KTH's "Guidelines on the Management of Research Centres" (reg. no.: V-2022-0046: 1.2).

Each centre is led by a steering group consisting of representatives from KTH and any partners. If all parties are represented in the steering group, the steering group decides on the centre's governance documents; otherwise, this is done at a so-called general assembly where all parties are represented. The centre director is responsible for managing the operational activities and implementing the decisions of the steering group.

The centre receives administrative support (finance and communication) from the school to which it is linked, the so-called host school. The host school is specified in the President's decision. KTH's University Administration (GVS) provides centrally located support, including at the Research Support Office (RSO), the innovation department (KTH Innovation) and the Library (KTHB). Since 2020, the Communications Department (COM) has a dedicated resource to support, at a strategic level, the communication work with competence centres.

It is important for both KTH and the competence centres themselves to communicate the research being conducted, its progress and results. For the competence centre, this can be a way to attract more partners and funding.

There is a shared value in clarifying the cooperation between KTH and the competence centre in external communication. For the competence centre, KTH is a strong brand to be associated with and provides a kind of scientific guarantee for its activities. For KTH, the research and collaboration of the competence centres is important evidence of what the University wants to be associated with among its target groups - to contribute to creating a better future for individuals, companies and society (*Brighter Tomorrow*, see [KTH's Communication Strategy](#)). By making the activities of the competence centres visible, KTH creates opportunities for interdisciplinary research and close collaboration with external parties and funding bodies.

## 2 Aim and goals

This framework guides and clarifies the work on competence centre communication at a general level. The framework is intended for those people and positions involved in some way with centre communication. The document also serves as a tool for the introduction of new staff members who will be working on centre communication.

## 2.1 Content

The framework outlines:

- Who does what: roles and responsibilities of COM, schools and centres.
- Procedures and guidelines for centre communication at KTH.
- Tools available for ongoing and strategic communication.

## 2.2 Objective

- Clarify the resources required for centre communication.
- Support competence centre directors and communicators in their communication work.
- Create consensus and strengthen cooperation on centre communication within KTH (between centres, schools and COM).
- Create a clearer link between KTH's brand and the competence centres, as part of KTH's and the centres' external communication.

## 3 Guidelines for competence centres

Centres are regulated by KTH's "Guidelines on the Management of Research Centres" (reg. no: V-2022-0046: 1.2). The guidelines state the following regarding the communication of the centre:

- A centre shall *profile itself as a centre operating at KTH in the centre's communication, where other participating parties must be made visible in a consistent manner.*
- The centre's steering group/general assembly shall *decide on a strategic plan and on a communication strategy for the centre's activities.*
- The steering group shall *decide on the operational and communication plans for each financial year. (May not be sub-delegated.)*
- The director is *responsible for ensuring that the centre's communication is up-to-date and complies with KTH's internal rules for web publishing, visual identity and branding, etc.*

## 4 Roles and responsibilities (who does what)

Throughout the organisation, including at COM, schools and centres, different roles and resources work on centre communication. Their responsibilities and roles differ, but cooperation among them is essential for successful centre communication. By sharing information, knowledge and experience, the communication support can jointly solve challenges and avoid reinventing the wheel. This provides better conditions for everyone to carry out their communication tasks, work in a similar way and achieve the objectives that exist for KTH and the university's competence centres.

The roles and responsibilities reflecting the resource situation (2023) are set out below. For contact information, visit KTH's intranet.

#### **4.1 Competence centres**

Competence centre management has a key role in communication and consists of the following roles.

##### **4.1.1 Centre director**

The director is ultimately responsible for the centre's activities and must ensure that resources are allocated to the communication work.

##### **4.1.2 Centre communicator**

Some centres, especially larger ones, have their own centre communicators who are hired through the host school, or are external consultants on a percentage basis. In that case, this resource is responsible for the centre's communication and works closely with the centre director, any partners and the host school's communicators.

For the centre communicator, the director is an important link to the research activities. Close collaboration between the director and the communicator is important in order to be able to discuss and identify the right content and way forward for the communication work. This collaboration places the communicator closer to the organisation, increases the opportunities for proactive work and allows the communicator to take full ownership of the communication work.

#### **4.2 Schools**

Each centre connects to one of KTH's schools, i.e. the centre's host school:

- Architecture and the Built Environment (ABE)
- Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS)
- Industrial Engineering and Management (ITM)
- Chemistry, Biotechnology and Health (CBH)
- Engineering Sciences (SCI)

The host school is responsible for providing operational communication support to the competence centre. This includes developing a communication plan, producing print materials and content, and establishing, managing and closing the competence centre's channels, primarily its website. The communication unit at each school is the first point of contact for centre directors. If necessary, the unit will contact positions at COM (see below) that need to be involved in the work.

The scope and content of the operational communication support varies according to the resources available in the school and the needs of the centre. Contact the communications manager at the host school for a detailed and up-to-date description of the work and what support is available.

#### **4.3 Communications Department (COM)**

Communications Department (COM) has the mission to coordinate, lead and create a common path for KTH's research communication at a strategic level. One of the objectives is for KTH to work as uniformly and proactively as possible in this area. COM is also responsible for the management and

development of KTH's brand as well as coordinating communication issues with other organisational units. Within COM, the roles listed below work most closely with centre communications.

#### 4.3.1 Research communicator responsible for centre communication

The COM centre communicator works in an advisory and guiding capacity in the work of centre communication. The assignment includes, among other things, designing procedures and recommendations based on the needs of the organisation and acting as a strategic support and sounding board for communicators working with competence centres. During the start-up of new centres, this position at COM can support the host school and the centre in developing a communication strategy. COM can also act as a support when the centre engages in dialogue with partners on issues such as co-branding, choice of publication tools and naming (particularly relevant for high-profile centres).

The centre communicator works closely with KTH's Research Communications Manager.

#### 4.3.2 Project and production management

The project and production management team is located within the Brand Support at COM. The team is responsible for KTH's contracted communication agencies. These agencies will support KTH's organisations (including competence centres) with everything from strategic communication support, film production, photography, services related to graphic expression, campaign planning, design of productions to be advertised, printed or visible in digital channels and the production of editorial content and articles. Orders from organisations are emailed directly to the communications agencies with [produktion@kth.se](mailto:produktion@kth.se) on cc/copy. Orders can also be sent to [produktion@kth.se](mailto:produktion@kth.se) if there are any questions about the order and/or ordering support. [Here](#), you can read more about ordering communication services.

It is primarily the host school that supports the centre with communication. The project and production management at COM can assist with any issues that arise in relation to ordering from agencies, briefs and quotations. The position also advises on issues related to KTH's visual identity, logo use and co-branding.

#### 4.3.3 System manager

KTH's system manager is responsible for the management of KTH's publishing system and supports webmasters at the schools in strategic issues related to the centre's websites, such as requirements for the publishing environment. In the first instance, the communicator for the centre should contact the school's webmaster, who in turn will contact the system manager if necessary.

#### 4.3.4 Content Group

The Content Group is responsible for KTH's press service and produces editorial content for KTH-wide channels such as the website, social media and intranet. Linked to the Content Group are target-group teams that work on a long-term basis to plan targeted content for each specific target group. The work includes capturing, evaluating and prioritising news tips and relevant content from KTH's activities, including competence centres.



## 5 Routines

Below are the routines for the different life phases of the centre - start-up, ongoing and termination.

### 5.1 Start-up

The start-up phase of a new centre is fundamental for the communication work ahead. Agreement between centre directors and communicators regarding expectations, information and support from the outset will create better conditions for collaboration and the implementation of operational and strategic communication work.

#### 5.1.1 Start-up meeting

Prior to the launch of a centre, the host school should hold a start-up meeting with the centre director, the COM centre communicator and the communication representative from the host school to discuss and ensure consensus on the following points:

- What resources are available and what has been agreed for communication work
- The needs and wishes of the centre in relation to communication
- Priorities for the centre's communicator (based on the above points)
- Roles and responsibilities and contact points for different issues (COM, host school, centre)
- Timetable and process for the development of the communication strategy and plan
- Possible communication channels for the centre, KTH and the host school
- Guidelines for co-profiling with KTH
- Routines for sharing content and tipping off about news at KTH
- Practical tools (e.g., templates and guides) and collaborative forums for centre communication at KTH

A start-up meeting should take place and be documented regardless of the size of the centre and should result in an agreement between the centre and the school, signed by the centre director and the head of school. The agenda and participants are adapted to the size and needs of the centre. A draft agenda and associated questionnaire are [available on the internal website](#) and can be used as a guide for a start-up meeting.

In order to ensure consensus on the way forward, it is important to document priorities for communication work and how the communicator should allocate his or her time. This can later be used as a basis for the implementation and evaluation of ongoing work.

#### 5.1.2 Training for research communication

COM offers a digital Canvas course in research communication, designed for KTH employees working within or linked to research activities. This is particularly recommended for researchers, centre directors and collaboration leaders. It can be found [here](#).

### 5.1.3 Development of communication strategy and plan

In accordance with KTH's guidelines for centres within research (reg. no.: V-2022-0046 1.2), each organisation must develop a communication strategy based on the centre's goals and clarify the way forward for communication. The strategy sets out, among others, the division of responsibilities, the dissemination of information and visibility among the involved parties.

The centre director is ultimately responsible for its development with the assistance of the communication representative from the host school or centre, who is responsible for the process with strategic support from the COM centre communicator. The centre's steering group can also act as a sounding board for the director in developing the communication strategy. The director and the host school's or centre's communicator have the best knowledge of the activities and the local conditions, while COM can contribute with a strategic and overall KTH perspective as well as experience from other competence centres. Close cooperation between these roles is recommended for successful centre communication. The communication strategy of the organisation must then be decided by the centre's steering group or general assembly.

According to KTH's guidelines, in addition to the strategy, centres must also develop a communication plan for each year of operation. The communication plan shall be based on and complement the communication strategy, and shall describe the communication activities planned to be carried out during the year. The centre director is responsible for developing the communication plan together with the centre's communicator. The COM centre communicator is available for advice and consultation if needed. The steering group or general assembly decides on the communication plan including the budget for each year.

Templates and instructions for establishing a [communication strategy and communication plan are available for download](#) on KTH's intranet.

### 5.1.4 Establish channels

#### 5.1.4.1 Create a website

The centre has the opportunity to set up its own website under the KTH website (kth.se) in the Polopoly publishing tool. Before deciding on the website, the centre should review and answer the following questions:

- Why do we need a website?
- Whom is the website for?
- What resources do we have to produce content and update the site?

The webmaster at the host school can help to discuss the issues and present the options available. See contact details [here](#). If necessary, the webmaster can involve the system manager at COM in setting up the website in KTH's publishing tool.

For [information on website options](#), see documents on the KTH intranet.

#### 5.1.4.2 Newsletter

KTH uses a number of different tools for newsletters, one of which is Apsis. Each school has its own internal newsletter in Apsis, which is usually put together by the school communicators and sent once a week. In the first instance, it is recommended to contact the communication manager at the host school

to discuss how the centre can distribute important news through existing newsletters or other similar channels. COM can assist with any contractual issues relating to Apsis.

#### 5.1.4.3 Social media

COM is responsible for KTH's overall social media accounts and for national student recruitment accounts. The Education Development Office (EDO) is responsible for international student recruitment accounts. KTH's official social media accounts are managed by COM, primarily by the Social Media Manager who is located in the Content Group. KTH's main accounts are on Facebook (one national and one international), Instagram (mainly for student recruitment, national and international), LinkedIn and Twitter.

Since 2022, KTH have established showcase pages on LinkedIn. Showcase pages are subpages to KTH's official account, and each is specified on a decided research area. In December 2023, there are four pages: energy, digitalisation, material science, and cities. Local communications officers, who collect content from all over KTH, run the pages. Besides the LinkedIn pages, a few schools also have their own social media accounts for their subject areas.

KTH is a public authority and is obliged to monitor its social media channels, clarify message originator and continuously handle questions and comments without undue delay. Setting up a new channel is quick, but managing it and filling it with content takes time. Only rarely does KTH launch additional social media channels linked to the brand, and has put together a set of criteria for new channels.

To broadcast news in KTH's existing social media channels, see [here](#) which channels are available and how to contact the person responsible. A good place to start is by contacting the communication team at the host school.

If you wish to contribute content to KTH's LinkedIn pages, contact the local editorial team by [clicking here](#).

If you wish to discuss starting a social media page, read more [here](#) or contact KTH's Social Media Manager for further discussion.

#### 5.1.5 Co-profiling (visual identity)

KTH's guidelines for competence centres (see point 3 above) state that each competence centre must profile itself as an organisation within KTH in its communication, and that the other participating parties must be made visible in a consistent manner. The centre director is responsible for ensuring that the centre's communication is up-to-date and complies with KTH's internal rules for web publishing, visual identity and branding. Read about [co-profiling on the intranet](#).

If the centre has additional owners besides KTH, it is important to discuss at an initial stage (e.g. in connection with the start-up meeting) how each party should be made visible and what the centre should be called. This should be set out in the communication strategy decided by the centre's steering group or general assembly.

KTH's graphic profile clarifies how the KTH logo should be used in communication materials, both independently and in combination with other brands. All this is explained in the visual identity on [KTH's intranet](#).

The KTH brand is strong, both nationally and internationally, and therefore advantageous for centres to link up with. KTH has an active, strategic and well-functioning branding programme. In view of this,

it is not recommended that centres dedicate time to initiating their own brands, such as their own logos.

If the centre wishes to develop its own identity, this must be discussed with COM, who can be reached via [grafiskprofil@kth.se](mailto:grafiskprofil@kth.se). The COM centre communicator and Brand Support can support the centre director and the communications officer on such issues, as well as in dialogue with partners where necessary.

#### 5.1.6 Events

Many competence centres organise events such as seminars, panel discussions, workshops, lectures and conferences. [Here](#) is a guide to organising an event. Below is the communication work linked to an event.

Beforehand:

- Create a calendar post for the event, and add it to relevant calendars such as the centre and host school's calendars on their respective websites and submit it to the [KTH calendar](#).
- Disseminate the event through relevant channels such as newsletters, intranet articles or personal email invitations.
- Decide whether to print/order any material such as invitations, posters, informational material, nameplates or signposts.
- Decide whether to hire a writer or photographer for the event.

Afterwards:

- If documented by a writer and/or photographer, this may be published on the centre's, and possibly on the host school's website and its newsletters.

## 5.2 Ongoing communication work

The form of the ongoing communication work is guided by the activities described and decided upon in the centre's communication plan.

The communicator should be in regular contact with the centre director in the course of his/her work. This frequent dialogue enables the communicator to prioritise, take ownership of the centre's communication, produce relevant content and work proactively. For some centres, there may also be an agreement for external partners to contribute additional resources to the centre's communication work. The centre's communicator should be in regular contact with these resources in order to coordinate activities and opportunities for optimal visibility.

### 5.2.1 Identify and produce content

The ongoing communication work consists largely of identifying and producing relevant content to reach the centre's target audiences. It is therefore important for the communicator to have a good knowledge of the target groups, their motivations, what is relevant and interesting for them to know and how best to reach them. There may be important differences among target audiences which communicators must take into account in their content planning.

Content production can range from writing articles and producing films to developing presentation materials and creating advertisements for events. Who produces this is decided by the centre director in consultation with the communication officer. In some cases, the content is produced by the host school or the centre's communicator and in other cases the centre brings in external consultancy support. For inspiration, templates and support for ongoing communication activities, [this](#) page will help.

Finished content can be used in several contexts, for example on the centre's website, in the school's newsletter and, in some cases, in KTH's external channels (depending on space and news value). Below are procedures for broadcasting news via KTH, in KTH's overall and the schools' external channels. There may also be opportunities to broadcast content through any partner's external channels.

If a website has been developed, it must be managed and updated continuously to remain interesting and relevant to the centre's target audiences. It is important that what is produced and published complies with laws and regulations as well as KTH's guidelines and regulations. The fact that the page is updated regularly also increases the credibility of the content, as the site is date-stamped. More information is available on KTH's intranet ([here](#)):

- How to create content for the web
- KTH's web guidelines
- Conceptual guidelines
- Digital accessibility - laws and opportunities
- General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR

## 5.2.2 Broadcast content in KTH's and schools' channels

### 5.2.2.1 KTH's overall channels

The Content Group at COM is responsible for content planning for KTH-wide channels. The group works on capturing, evaluating and prioritising news tips, including relevant content from centres.

Content with high news value for KTH's target groups is published in the KTH-wide news flow on KTH's external website and in social media channels (mainly Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter). The content of KTH's channels should reflect the breadth of KTH's activities and contribute to strengthening the brand and what the business wants to be associated with (see [KTH Communication Strategy](#), as well as [KTH's overall content work](#)). The overall channels have broad audiences, which means that news and content published on these channels must be generally appealing and comprehensible.

These are KTH's priority target groups for content work:

- Prospective national students
- Prospective international students
- Alumni

- Industry and funding bodies
- The research community
- Politicians and decision-makers
- Media
- Employees

For more information on how to contact the Content Group with tips, read [here](#).

#### 5.2.2.2 *Host-school channels*

KTH schools publish their own news on their respective external websites and internal pages. The schools each have an internal newsletter that includes both school-specific and KTH-wide news and information. The school channels are suitable for news aimed at a more niche target group compared to KTH's overall channels. The way news is produced differs between schools, with some writing their own news to a greater extent than others. Please contact the communication unit of the respective school for further information.

Tips on news and content from the centres should be sent in the first instance to the host school, which in turn can advise regarding what opportunities are available through the school's channels. If the news is relevant to KTH's overall channels, the host school is responsible for forwarding the tip to the content team at COM.

#### 5.2.2.3 *Researchers' Noticeboard*

Connected to KTH's overall newsroom on the external website is the [Researchers' Noticeboard](#), a page for niche research news produced by the schools. These news items are aimed at external audiences who already have some prior knowledge of a specific topic, such as industry and academia colleagues, research funding bodies, policy makers and opinion leaders. The content of the Researchers' Noticeboard is developed and published by KTH's school communicators.

The news can be about:

- Milestones from a department
- Increased research funding
- Popular-science summaries of key publications
- Significant collaborations
- Short research news items
- Awards of significance

[Here](#) you will find information on the procedures for sending news tips to the school newsletter and the researchers' noticeboard.

### 5.2.3 Documentation of activities and results

It is recommended for the communicator to continuously document the activities and impact of the centre's communication, such as media articles, meetings, seminars and conferences.

In addition to evaluating the ongoing work, which highlights and demonstrates the progress made, the centre may need to report on its progress over the years of operation before terminating its activities. Sometimes there are specific and particular reporting requirements from the centre's funding bodies. If this is the case, the centre director should inform the communicator at an early stage so that continuous documentation and evaluation can be carried out. This will make the feedback process easy and efficient for both the communicator and the centre manager.

There is an example of a [template for documentation of results](#) on the intranet.

The documentation can also be useful as a basis for the evaluation of the ongoing work and discussions on the issue of resources linked to the communication work.

### 5.2.4 Forum for centre communication at KTH

During 2023, a collaboration forum for those working with centre communication at KTH will be started. The forum is a place to share information and experiences in the field and discuss common challenges and needs. The COM centre communicator is the convener, but all centre communicators are expected to contribute with meeting content and active participation. The form and frequency of these meetings are determined within the group. To join the forum, contact the COM centre communicator (see [contact details on KTH's intranet](#)).

## 5.3 Centre termination

When a centre is terminated, certain communication activities need to be carried out. According to the centre guidelines, the name of the centre will be removed from the list on KTH's website and the organisational unit at KTH will be closed. See below for the routines related to web, social media and results reporting.

### 5.3.1 Web

- Prior to termination, the school webmaster shall arrange a meeting with the centre director and any centre communicator to plan the closure of the centre's website.
- At the latest one year after the formal closure of a centre (per basis for President's decision), the centre's website must be closed. This routine should also be applied to old centre home pages, i.e. home pages that have remained in the system for more than one year after the formal closure of the centre.
- If the information is to be stored locally in any way, this is to be done before the website is unpublished.
- If the site is to live on for a year without the centre being active, this must be made clear when visiting the site.
- If there is a need to move parts of the content to another web environment, this will be discussed in the first instance with the school's webmaster, who in turn can involve COM system managers if necessary.

- The IT department at KTH undertakes to handle redirection of URLs that expire up to two years after the website is closed. Requests for redirection will be communicated in the context of the planning of the site's decommissioning.
- If the website has its own main domain (i.e., is not placed under kth.se), IT at KTH will manage it for up to two years after the website is closed. The IT department then terminates the registration of the domain. If the centre director or another actor linked to the centre wishes to take over the domain, this must be decided in the context of the planning of the website's decommissioning.
- If there are questions about the websites of closed centres, for example if the contact person for the website is missing, the webmaster should contact the COM system manager who will confirm whether or not the websites should be removed. System manager can also see who last edited the page and when.
- The webmaster at the school is responsible for informing the COM centre communicator about the centre's closure, who in turn updates the information on KTH's external website.

### 5.3.2 Social channels

If the centre has set up its own social channels, these need to be closed when the centre closes.

### 5.3.3 Reporting of results

Before termination, it is important to summarise and demonstrate the results achieved by the centre's activities. What this means for the communication work should be discussed in good time with the centre director, preferably a year in advance, in order to plan the work and what is required from an external and internal perspective.