LASTING
POWERED BY WATERBORNE

D2.2 Creative Concept

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No.101006923

WORK PACKAGE	WP2 Communication strategy and stakeholder engagement
MAIN AUTHOR	BCW Team
CONTRIBUTORS	Ruxandra Matzalik Florescu (PRO DANUBE), Jorge Lara Lopez (VPF), Salih Karaarslan, Erwin van der Linden, Martin Quispel (SPB), George Smyrnakis (WEGEMT), Mihai Barcanescu (WATERBORNE TP), Jaap Gebraad (SEA Europe)
DISSEMINATION LEVEL	Public
DUE DATE	28-02-2022
DELIVERY DATE	
VERSION	
V1.0	22-12-2021
V2.0	14-01-2022
V2.1	31-01-2022
V3.0	11-02-2022
V4.0	24-02-2022
V5.0	02-03-2022
Final version	07-03-2022

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 3
List of Figures 4
1 Introduction 5
1.1 The LASTING Project 5
1.2 Creative Concept: Approach 7
2 Visual and Creative Representation: 'Essential Lasting Pack' 8
2.1 Story Boards 10
3 Visual & Creative Representation: Large-Scale Events 13
3.1 Exhibition/Fair stand – Messaging 13
3.2 Exhibition/Fair stand – Concepts 14
4 Visual and Creative Representation: Smaller Events 20
4.1 Formats 20
4.2 Messaging 21
5 Visual and Creative Representation: Hybrid Events and Virtual Events 22
5.1 Attending/Hosting Hybrid and Virtual Events 22
6 Cost/Benefit Analysis 26
7 Communication and Dissemination Support 28
7.1 Pre-event 28
7.2 Event 28
7.3 Post event 29
8 Contribution to LASTING's Objectives 30
9 Conclusion 31
Annex 32

List of Figures

FIGURE 1: LASTING PROJECT PARTNERS 6
FIGURE 2: BRANDED NOTEPAD AND BAG EXAMPLES, WATERBORNE 8
FIGURE 3: MOCK-UP OF LASTING FLOATING GLOBE - VIEW ON EUROPE 9
FIGURE 4: FLOATING GLOBE - ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS 10
FIGURE 5: MOCK-UP OF REFLECTION WALL - WE ARE ALL WATERBORNE 14
FIGURE 6: MOCK-UP OF LASTING LIGHTHOUSE STAND CONCEPT 15
FIGURE 7: BILLBOARD MOCK-UP - LASTING EVENT PRESENCE 15
FIGURE 8: MOCK-UP - LASTING STOP-AND-STARE MOMENTS 18
FIGURE 9: LASTING 1:1 VIRTUAL WORKSHOP 21
FIGURE 10: INSPIRE EMPOWER ENABLE CONNECT APPROACH FOR ONLINE/HYBRID EVENTS 23
FIGURE 11: VISUAL TO ILLUSTRATE THE RUN-UP TO THE VIRTUAL EVENT 24

1 Introduction

Digital transformation, as well as climate change and the energy transition in the waterborne transport sector, demand ground-breaking, implementable solutions – something which is at the heart of how the LASTING project shall be creatively represented.

LASTING's participation in events, fairs, conferences and at face-to-face (f2f), business-to-business (b2b) or virtual meetings, represents an opportunity to reach out to the relevant waterborne transport actors as well as both public and private stakeholders.

This document presents a range of possible formats that are tailored to reflect the strategic and unified voice of the LASTING representation designed to drive European RD&I awareness and insights among the waterborne transport sector and encourage participation, creating a 'plug-and-play' event concept to be used by the project and, subsequently, by WATERBORNE TP.

1.1 The LASTING Project

Considering the diversity of the waterborne transport sector, its geographical scope, the international dimension and the challenges and opportunities upfront, LASTING (Let's go for Waterborne Transport Research – Broadening engagement and increasing impact) will broaden the engagement of the wider waterborne transport sector in European RD&I activities, by developing a communication strategy, and implementing a long-lasting communication campaign beyond the lifetime of this project, ultimately increasing stakeholder engagement in the sector, and thereby increasing the impact of European waterborne transport RD&I.

The communication strategy, and thereby the campaign will be based on clear key performance indicators (KPIs) set at the starting point of LASTING, jointly developed with the relevant European Commission Services and the broader waterborne transport sector. The achievement of the KPIs will be measured at fixed intervals, to ensure that the final communication strategy and the campaign will be fit-for purpose and ready for roll-out. An essential element of the communication strategy will be the development of a plug-and-play system for participation in European, national, or regional strategic maritime and/or inland waterway transport events. In the framework of LASTING, the plug-and-play system will be tested on several occasions, to ensure the system is fit-for-purpose.

In addition, high quality dissemination materials (such as flyers and banners) and templates will be delivered. There will be a focus on the use of digital tools for dissemination purposes, to ensure that the communication efforts of the waterborne transport community will easily follow the concept launched in the framework of LASTING. Finally, yet importantly, the Waterborne Technology Platform will take over the communication strategy and campaign after the lifetime of LASTING and will ensure a durable implementation of the concepts and materials developed in the framework of the project.
LASTING is coordinated by SEA Europe, counting with the participation of a total of seven partners from four EU countries. LASTING is funded by the European Commission research and innovation

programme Horizon 2020, with an investment of 1.3 million Euro over the course of 36 months, starting in January 2021.

Figure 1: LASTING Project Partners

1.2 Creative Concept: Approach

Taking into consideration the specifics of the previously conducted research work and its findings regarding RD&I in the waterborne transport sector in Europe – in several project work packages (*WP1 Information GAP analysis and recommendations*, *WP3 Communications Campaign*) –, the creative concept considers and leverages these findings in presenting LASTING to the projects stakeholder and audience. BCW in close cooperation with the LASTING's partners will advise on the best option to realise and develop the creative representation of the waterborne transport sector and its RD&I in all its diversity.

The creative concept for LASTING is developed from the following, outlined across the WPs, with specific focus on task 2.3 (*see Chapter 8 on Contribution to LASTING's objectives*) aiming to:

- broaden awareness and increase the impact of the waterborne transport research and best practice examples;
- promote waterborne transport innovation in overall strategic transport events;
- ensure long-lasting engagement with key public and private stakeholders;
- maximize the value of participation to the events through cost-benefit analysis.

The creative concept outlined in this document, is presented throughout seven chapters:

2. Visual and creative representation: essential LASTING pack;
3. Visual and creative representation: large scale events;
4. Visual and creative representation: smaller scale events;
5. Visual and creative representation: hybrid and online events;
6. Cost-benefit analysis;
7. Communication and dissemination support;
8. Contribution to LASTING's objectives.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: LASTING AND WATERBORNE TP CONNECTION

LASTING as a project is responsible for developing and executing a campaign, part of which is a representation at various events with a creative concept, to enhance awareness and increase participation in EU funded projects of the broader waterborne transport sector. However, as LASTING itself will not remain an entity or brand after the lifetime of the project and the communication is to be taken over by Waterborne TP, the creative concept has been developed with this longer time horizon in mind. Consequently, this document at times refers to LASTING, the broader waterborne transport sector, and Waterborne TP when discussing elements of the creative concept, its use and deployment, and its messaging.

2 Visual and Creative Representation: 'Essential Lasting Pack'

When joining an event or organising one themselves, LASTING's partners must ensure visual and creative continuity in the way LASTING is represented towards other organisations. This 'Essential LASTING Pack' supports partners in this endeavour by listing and providing access to all necessary visuals and content, which can be downloaded under the following link:

https://fileshare-emea.bm.com/fl/XVWD4NFRM3?web=1&wdLOR=c19A23936-C5AD-47EB-8564-589AA205E659

The 'Essential LASTING Pack' is ideal for small-scale events and forms a strong base for large-scale events. For online/hybrid events, the virtual backgrounds and videos are essential items. All three types of events can be further complemented with additional elements that fit with the specific type of event where LASTING is represented.

All display and visual materials of the pack are LASTING branded, and include:

- Roll-ups;
- Video (introducing LASTING, can be played on a loop on the booth's screen);
- Event-specific branded flyers;
- A PowerPoint (general or event-specific) presentation fitting the identity of Waterborne TP;
- A backdrop for presentations / speaking opportunities;
- Branded tablecloth;
- Branded physical backdrop in the form of a banner (for in-person events);
- Branded virtual backdrop (for hybrid and virtual events);
- Writing utensils (pens, notepads).

Figure 2: Branded Notepad and Bag Examples, Waterborne

Attention-catching exhibitory objects can be developed as part of the 'Essential LASTING Pack', among which is the "We Are All Waterborne" rotating/floating globe (see figure 3). The globe aims to convey the message: *From Europe to the world: European RD&I can have an impact on the greening of waterborne transport for Europe and across the globe.* (A message that can be featured on mini-banners to the right and left of the globe if needed/requested). Easily displayable on a stand and eye-catching to visitors, this type of exhibitory object could be branded to reflect the waterborne sector and LASTING's identity *(currently manufactured and commercialised designs of this type of world globe have been added hereunder for illustration purposes)*. The world globe is an extremely fitting visual representation of the significance of the waterborne transport sector: with about 71 percent of the Earth's surface being water-covered, it strongly underlines the importance of the sector on a broad scale, its omnipresence across the continents, and how we are all ultimately concerned with and impacted by the future of the waterborne transport sector.

Figure 3: Mock-up of LASTING floating globe - view on Europe

Figure 4: Floating globe - alternative options

2.1 Story Boards

To promote participation to events, as well as to reach stakeholders who have not participated afterwards, we use the power of short videos. These short videos will be shared and promoted on LASTING's as well as partners' social media channels. Through elements of the visual identity guidelines, they will be instantly recognizable.

1. VIDEO TO PROMOTE PARTICIPATION TO THE EVENT

In 30-second videos, we encourage participants to join the events where LASTING will be represented. The below presents a standard approach and can be slightly tweaked and customized to the larger targeted events, e.g. SMM, etc.

Text/message	Visual	Sound
Are you joining X event?	Text	Jingle with waterborne sounds (ports, ships, and water)
LASTING will be there too! And we would love to meet you.	Footage of the waterborne transport sector; potential footage of ambassadors	Voice-over with music
Come and talk to us. Discover our innovative insights from across the diverse waterborne transport sector.	Footage of data and research in the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
We'd love to discover how we can push together for innovation and research.	Footage of innovations and new technologies in the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
Because the future of waterborne transport is now, and it is green.	Footage of ecological angles in the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
We look forward to seeing you and sharing ideas on the	Text with key information (date, place, how to register)	Jingle with waterborne sounds (ports, ships, and water)

future of the waterborne transport sector		

2. VIDEO FOR DURING THE EVENTS

This video can be shown at booths, at the start or during breaks of seminars, or as a stand-alone, outside events (cf. item 2 of the 'Essential LASTING Pack' on p. 8). This video's duration should be between 50 and 80 seconds.

Text/message	Visual	Sound
Join us and discover LASTING.	Footage of the waterborne transport activities	Jingle with waterborne sounds (ports, ships, and water)
We are innovating for a sustainable future.	Ship cruising toward the horizon, where icons of sustainability elements can be seen	Voice-over with music
The waterborne transport sector is going green.	Footage of emissions, downward arrow, efficient ships, etc.	Voice-over with music
The future is now; the future is smart and green. The waterborne transport sector acting now for zero-emissions and climate neutrality.	Footage of innovations and new technologies in the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
How? Investments in RD&I and funding at a European level.	Footage of data and research in the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
This is how the waterborne transport sector contributes to the European Green Deal.	Footage of ecological angles, economics statistics on growth, economy, and jobs of the waterborne transport sector	Voice-over with music
Follow us on social media.		Jingle with waterborne sounds (ports, ships, and water)

3. POST-EVENT VIDEO (LARGE-SCALE EVENTS ONLY)

With the footage that is recorded at the large-scale events, we propose to develop one to five short videos of between 30 seconds and 1 minute, according to the following template.

Text/message	Visual	Sound
We learnt so much about you at X event	Quick slide show of pictures that represent the event: location, participants, key speakers, key visual elements.	Voice-over with music
"Our future is now" "Our future is green"	Voice pop of participants.	Testimonial of various participants

"Together towards a zero-emission waterborne (transport) sector" "The importance of the waterborne transport sector to achieve climate goals/European Green Deal"		
Key message of event	Footage of key speaker	Key speaker's voice
Want to know more?	Text: follow us on social media or meet us at a future event.	

3 Visual & Creative Representation: Large-Scale Events

How to bring a LASTING change to fairs and exhibitions?

When invited to join an event or to organise one themselves, LASTING's partners must ensure visual and creative continuity in the way LASTING is represented toward other organisations. This section describes concepts and ideas that can inspire LASTING's representation at large-scale events, in addition to the elements outlined in the 'Essential LASTING Pack'.

3.1 Exhibition/Fair stand – Messaging

Listed below are the messages for the events classified according to pillars and core words.

Pillars			
1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Questions *Create curiosity among the visitors for the issues and challenges addressed by LASTING*	**We Are Waterborne ("Myth Busting")** *Speak to the understanding that stakeholders have about LASTING – innovation, sustainability, research, policy, and agendas. Demystifying what LASTING is, what LASTING does, what LASTING could do and how to engage with LASTING*	**Educate to Empower** *Provide insight into the barriers that stakeholders face in terms of innovation, funding, and sustainability challenges, and what hinders their knowledge in this regard and towards the LASTING project, but also the waterborne transport sector more broadly*	**Going forward** *Showcase what a sustainable waterborne transport future can look like, what is needed to achieve it and how Waterborne TP is driving it – all through the lens of data*

Core concepts to be reflected throughout the exhibition communication and visuals with the following core words.

Core words			
Leader	**Sustainability**	**Trusted**	**Now & Green**
LASTING is showing how the waterborne transport sector is pushing for innovation, research, etc.	*Eco-friendly, long-term solutions and vision for a better environment and towards a zero-emission waterborne transport sector.*	*Trusted, safe and reliable solutions for the modernization of an active sector.*	*European Green Deal implementation with waterborne transport stakeholders and partners. Future starts now.*

3.2 Exhibition/Fair stand – Concepts

This section describes potential concepts and formats which could be used for the exhibition stand.

Pillar 1: Questions

INTRIGUING VISUAL ELEMENTS - RAISING EYEBROWS WITH QUESTIONS

We will attract the attention of visitors based on visual elements linked to Waterborne as set of the industries, combined with intriguing questions/facts about subsectors (Did you know that..., etc.).

- **Waterborne transport inspiration**: The exhibition stand could be elevated, showcasing Waterborne TP as the common platform of the sector. The outside walls/screens of the platform could be mirrors featuring above them the message "We Are All Waterborne. Discover How." The person sees a reflection of themselves, but also sees all the other visitors around them being reflected in the mirror, thus creating this impression of "We" besides one's own reflection, which also underlines the individual's belonging to Waterborne (see figure below).

Figure 5: Mock-up of Reflection Wall - We Are All Waterborne

Another option would be to install a lighthouse that works as a beacon at the event, attracting participants and shining a light towards a sustainable future waterborne transport sector. The Waterborne/LASTING logo and/or tagline could then be projected on the walls (see figure below).

Figure 6: Mock-up of LASTING Lighthouse Stand Concept

Figure 7: Billboard Mock-up - LASTING Event Presence

<u>Pillar 2: We Are Waterborne (Myth Busting - demystifying what LASTING is about)</u>

Showcasing the people/key players/gamechangers behind the project

The first section of the exhibition showcases the LASTING/Waterborne TP Ambassadors. Key actors of the projects representing the waterborne transport sector share the purpose of the LASTING project, the ZEWT Partnership, their consortia, and other RD&I activities for a more sustainable sector through personalized stories, roles, and motivation. Although not there physically, through digital screens, a series of monologues will be broadcasted/pre-recorded in sequence where Ambassadors' share the

passion and motivation behind the Waterborne TP/LASTING. This brings the project closer to visitors and stakeholders, giving a personal touch, and busting myths about the sector.

Waterborne transport inspiration: Produce video interviews of LASTING/Waterborne TP Ambassadors speaking about a particular product, innovation challenge or barrier, funding program, technology, and its impact.

Pillar 3: Educate to Empower

INTERACTIVE EDUCATION

The findings and identified innovation challenges and solutions by LASTING to achieve a more sustainable waterborne transport future will be showcased through an interactive, hands-on experience. Content will focus on illustrating the main needs of the sector, opportunities as well as illustrative projects and technologies, drawing on and leveraging the insights provided by WP1 (*D1.1 Report on information gaps concerning innovation needs* as pillar 1, *D1.3 Report on opportunities for participation* as pillar 3, and *D1.4 Gap Analysis recommendations* as pillar 4 shall be leveraged most extensively, while *D1.2 Report on research management systems and maintenance* as pillar 2 will be leveraged to a lesser extent, due to its more technical nature of current research information systems and recommendations regarding these).

Content Pillar 1 (Information on Information Gaps and Innovation Needs):

The innovation needs of the four main actor groups of the sector, their motivations as well as the challenges they see will be reproduced. The graphics shall also focus on how these challenges can be addressed, again as per the stakeholder's insights.

Possible formats: interactive or static infographics.

Content Pillar 2 (Information on Research Management Systems):

As *D1.2 Report on research management systems and maintenance* covers predominantly technical aspects of information management systems, it does not easily lend itself to creating engaging and interactive learning experiences. One approach that can be envisioned, is the showcasing of the most commonly used databases for information on waterborne transport RD&I projects (e.g. CORDIS, TRIMIS, ESO, etc.), their advantages and drawbacks.

Possible formats: tabular and clickable overview table.

Content Pillar 3 (Information on Opportunities for Participation in RD&I):

Overview table of the main RD&I funding opportunities, the projects they finance, TRL levels, regional scope, etc. will be shown for stakeholders to easily navigate and learn about RD&I opportunities that could apply to them. Another possibility tailored to specific events is the creation of pop-up questions serving as hooks encouraging stakeholders to learn about specific funding sources relevant to them.

For example, when attending an event on the future of fuels, use the pop-up question hook: “Looking for funding for your clean fuels projects?” → Discover the Innovation Fund and what it can do for you! Further, the identification of bottlenecks and gaps for participation in RD&I activities will be listed, linking them with the corresponding solutions identified by LASTING’s research (*D1.3 Report on opportunities for participation*, chapters 3-4).

Possible format: interactive and clickable overview table, drag-and-drop bottleneck and solution matching (interactive game), pop-up question and explainer. Alternatively, factsheets and infographics are further formats to convey the content of this pillar.

Content Pillar 4 (Information on RD&I Storylines, as recommended by D1.4):
Aligned with the light scenario for future tools outlined in *D1.4 Gap Analysis recommendations*, inspirational storylines are showcased through project examples from the existing database of European RD&I projects. The stories will be told along the structure of CHALLENGE – FUNDING – TECHNOLOGY – IMPACT (sustainability outcome), educating stakeholders on what is possible and providing inspiration on how sustainable change can be achieved.

Possible formats: slide-story (swiping, 4 elements/parts).

STOP AND STARE MOMENTS
Bold statements and questions that are present in debates (either amongst the key players or the sector’s stakeholders) surrounding innovation and a sustainable waterborne transport sector could be printed out and hanged from the ceiling or pinned to the wall *(disclaimer: the implementation will depend on how the actual stand and space looks like and will be treated case by case*). Underneath each of the signs, the exhibition offers answers through concise but effective rationales and product displays.

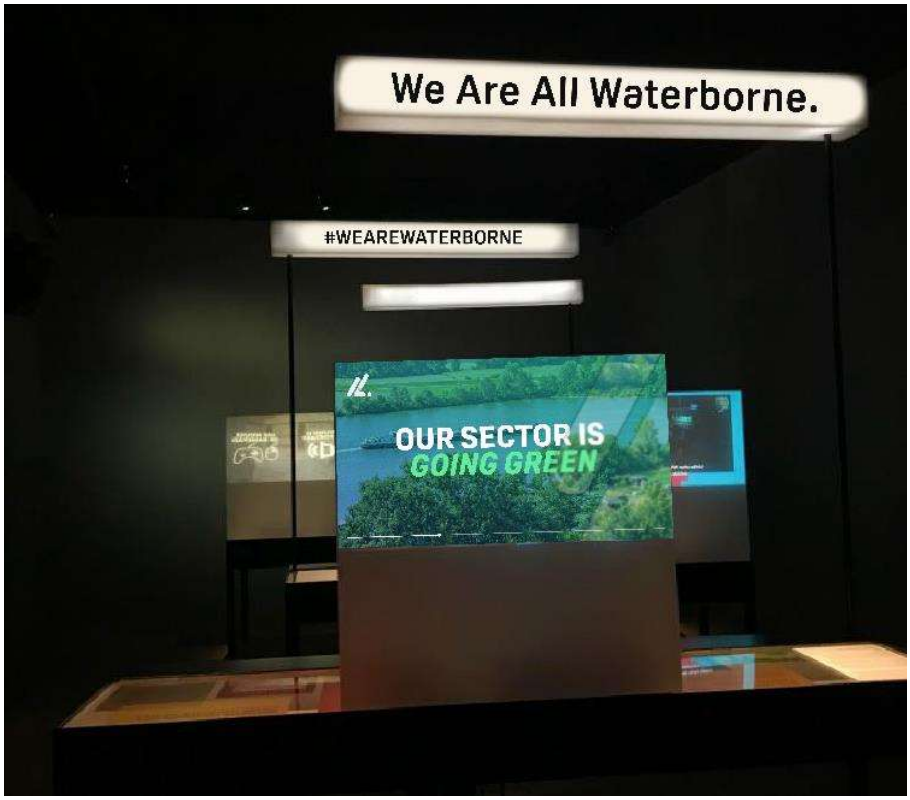

Figure 8: Mock-up - LASTING Stop-and-Stare Moments

- **Waterborne transport inspiration**: Use challenges or concerns that stakeholders have or questions they are asking or wanting to ask about RD&I in the waterborne transport sector and provide the answers through fact sheets, graphics, videos, etc. Show that Waterborne TP is a transparent network that adds tangible value and is addressing the "tough questions" faced by the sector in its desire to innovate and move towards a sustainable future.

Pillar 4: Going forward

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE

The exhibition corner touches upon the key stories and data that are showcasing how a sustainable, low to zero emissions and green waterborne transport future can look, the role of RD&I in this regard, as well as the challenges and solutions to achieve it. Latest innovations, research findings and technologies are presented. The relevance of those elements and how they tie into the European Green Deal and sustainability goals should be underlined.

- **LASTING inspiration**: Visuals and exhibition material shall focus on two aspects: **#FutureOfWaterborneTransport** – highlighting what can be achieved – and **#MakeWaterborneHappen** – showing what is needed to reach a sustainable waterborne future (in RD&I, policy, etc.) and what Waterborne TP is doing about it. The vision and goals

will be explained through infographics, banners. ***New ideas instead of #FutureofWaterborneTransport*** *(highlighting what can be achieved) and* ***for #MakeWaterborneHappen*** *showing what is needed to reach a sustainable waterborne future (in RD&I, policy, etc.) and what Waterborne TP is doing about it.*

- *#AllWaterborne*
- *#ZeroEmissionWaterborneTransport*
- *#BlueForGreen*
- *#ImagineWaterborne*
- *#BlueGrowthGreenFuture*
- *#InnovateForWaterborne*
- *#WaterborneInnovation*
- *#SustainableWaterborneFuture*

THOUGHT-PROVOKING TAKEAWAYS

The exhibition features a "take away" wall filled with different flyers that give visitors a take-away message on specific core points of the message that Waterborne aims to share (number of sheets depending on number of messages to be communicated). These flyers can be taken home by visitors and are to include contact details and QR codes linking to: 1. More information on the key message point; 2. the LASTING and Waterborne TP website; and 3. LASTING's LinkedIn channel.

- **Waterborne transport inspiration**: Provide a fact sheet or design blueprint alongside Waterborne TP contact details to follow so that visitors can continue conversations they had at the stand.

4 Visual and Creative Representation: Smaller Events

How do we actively engage with strategic partners and public stakeholders?
Whereas fairs, exhibitions and large-scale events allow for LASTING to reach a wider audience, small-scale events allow for a more tailored-made approach to reach specific stakeholders and to deepen the relation with strategic partners.

As such, these small-scaled events aim to:

- Develop and maintain an active and regular communication with strategic partners;
- Offer the opportunity for other relevant stakeholders to engage directly with Waterborne;
- To broaden awareness about the European waterborne RD&I projects, and LASTING.

4.1 Formats

Different formats could be considered here to support this purpose, with some being more fitted for an in-person approach and others for online participation, among which:

LASTING BUSINESS BREAKFAST
Keeping in mind potential COVID restrictions, a business breakfast every three months could be organised with strategic partners. This is a more informal, personal way to regularly discuss ongoing matters in the LASTING project and for the strategic partners to network. Up to 3 speakers, representing the waterborne transport sector, could be chosen to make short updates, present ideas, or upcoming relevant events and opportunities.

WATERBORNE / LASTING PANEL DISCUSSIONS
A panel discussion, both in person and online, offers the opportunity to not only spread awareness about a specific topic but also, through guest speakers, to have experts sharing their insights on the matter (RD&I perspective) and to have political stakeholders influential in the sector participate in the discussion (policy perspective).
A well-designed panel discussion featuring a relevant topic to our target groups and the presence of high-profile speakers would be beneficial to spread awareness about the European waterborne RD&I projects, and LASTING. The panel discussion could be coupled with a moment dedicated to networking, whether it would take place online or in-person. Beginning with a two-month basis would be a good start.

WATERBORNE / LASTING WORKSHOP
An interactive workshop would allow to communicate to (potential) partners on how to get involved to advance waterborne transport related innovation and help shape a sustainable future for the industry. Concrete actions should be presented, and opportunities for interaction and feedback (Q&A, Slido, etc.) planned. Organisations or individuals wishing to attend the event will be able to register online.

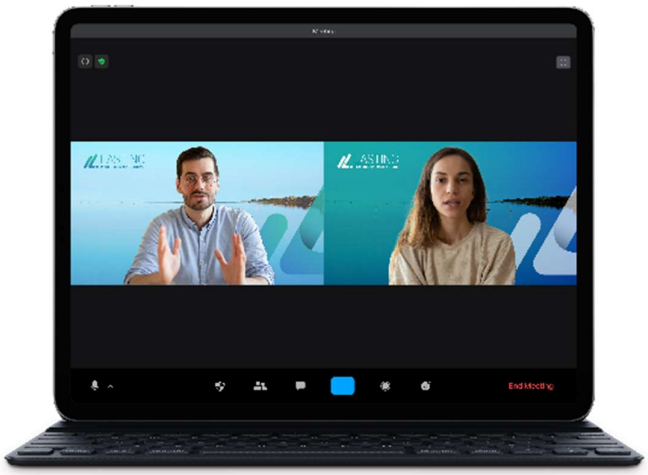

Figure 9: LASTING 1:1 Virtual Workshop

1-ON-1 BETWEEN WATERBORNE AND STRATEGIC PARTNER

A one-on-one meeting with each individual partner should be organized up to twice per semester, depending on needs and asks, as to ensure regular contact and in-depth discussion on ongoing matters. These meetings could represent an opportunity for brainstorming and exchange of best practices.

4.2 Messaging

CONTENT

Building on elements of the 'Essential LASTING Pack' (cf. pag. 8) and on the pillars and core words defined for large-scale events (cf. p. 11), the messaging in small-scale events should ensure continuity of the communication approach, and at the same time, ensure that the more specific messages of the LASTING project are spread among the relevant stakeholders. Core messages will increase the impact through:

- The need to establish a continuous dialogue to define medium and long-term goals;
- The importance of reaching a consensus together regarding RD&I and to focus efforts and resources accordingly;
- Vision for a sustainable future for the waterborne transport sector.

DISSEMINATION MATERIALS

In addition to the materials already outlined in the essential pack, several assets will be developed to support the communication approach during small-scale events organized by the waterborne transport sector, such as:

- Posters for in-person events to be displayed in the venue;
- Goodies/materials branded by Waterborne / LASTING (and event partners, if co-organized) made from sustainable materials;
- Pamphlets and fact sheets.

5 Visual and Creative Representation: Hybrid Events and Virtual Events

This section will offer a possibility for the adaptation of the LASTING's representation introduced for fairs, exhibitions and large- and small-scale events into an interactive virtual event and/or an online event with some in-studio presence, hence the hybrid format. The purpose to choose the hybrid and or fully virtual events would be to multiply the reach towards the wider audience, as well as to continue the engagement with targeted stakeholders, while deepening the relationship with strategic partners.

Our experience of designing and running events, particularly during the COVID-19 crisis, has taught us that online/hybrid events, even with many registered participants, tend to have a higher "no-show" rate than physical events. However, we will here present the INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ENABLE, CONNECT approach that is based on developing engaging content for inspiring the online/hybrid participation.

5.1 Attending/Hosting Hybrid and Virtual Events

The popularity of the **virtual events** is increasing, as it's providing detailed analytics, rescheduling flexibility, increased marketability for the industries and stakeholders. Virtual events are not only securing a sense of continuity with business as usual over the pandemic times, but they've offered a *transformed*, eco-friendly, and sometimes even a more creative approach (especially with the augmented reality experience-based events), albeit these virtual events can vary in terms of user-friendliness. Virtual events have also introduced numerous possibilities for securing a central database and 360 degrees' insights.

Hybrid events are the perfect solution for those programs and events that can effectively be held both onsite and virtually due to various reasons. *(e.g. the attendee cannot or does not want to travel due to health or safety concerns. The attendee's organization has limited travel spend and, therefore,*

cannot travel to the event. The venue where you will be hosting the onsite portion of the event has capacity limitations, so not all attendees will be allowed to gather onsite.)

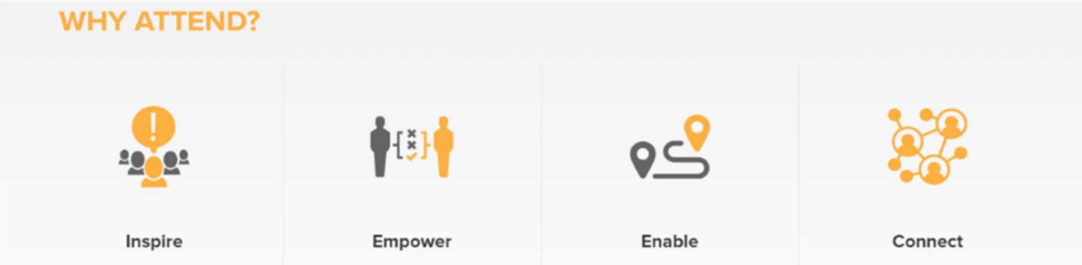

Figure 10: INSPIRE EMPOWER ENABLE CONNECT approach for online/hybrid events

Ahead of organizing a hybrid/virtual event or preparing for the one to attend, the LASTING (and subsequently waterborne transport sector) members will consult the following checklist:

- **Prepare a mini communication campaign to engage with online audiences and/or attract the participants/stakeholders** (with social-media strategy/calendar) tailored for pre-event, during the event, and as a follow-up to the event purpose. The promotional campaign should aim to maximize personal engagement with the LASTING and Waterborne TP's objectives among all stakeholders, deploying a range of initiatives and activities that will provide an interactive and engaging experience for the event's participants. *More upfront promotion will be necessary than for a traditional event.*

- **Use Your dedicated LASTING branding**. In case of hybrid events, visual identity complementary to two dimensions of the program and participation: studio/on-the-ground one and online. This will include a design of back-drops, tailored videos and highlighted stories.

- **Get insights and get to know your audience:** develop the pre-event survey & post-event survey. Monitor the participation and interest of the waterborne transport audience. Make sure to follow up with those attendees who attended a lot of sessions, asked a lot of questions, or engaged with your key speakers and/or sponsors.

- **Develop a "one event, but two experiences" mentality**, where virtual and in-person formats are treated equally. Develop content for in-person and virtual attendees where you will have to deliver your content differently to both groups. You will have to make sure that your video streaming service is working correctly, and that your presenters are prepared to be recorded and to speak in front of a camera.

- **Produce Engaging content or agenda** - incorporate live polls or Q&A to keep virtual attendees involved. Make sure that the sessions are a digestible length. Create a separate content for the virtual attendees.

- **All-in approach:** Navigating time zones

- **Personalize virtual experience #WeAreWaterborne with a collaborative culture:**
  - Apply a fully LASTING/Waterborne branding in the chatrooms and throughout online presentations, videos, and charts;
  - Develop exclusive virtual-only interviews with industry experts, or panel discussions with thought leaders;
  - Pre-event promotion shall include virtual chatrooms where speakers and topics will be introduced, like Twitter Spaces and LinkedIn chats;
  - Effectively designate onsite vs. virtual sessions through the customized registration paths, so no attendees register for the incorrect sessions;
  - Engage onsite representative dedicated exclusively to the LASTING/waterborne transport sector virtual attendees that can talk to the attendees specifically about their virtual experiences and introduce virtual-only sessions or networking opportunities;
  - Create LASTING/waterborne transport sector Avatars for representation at online/hybrid events;
  - Introduce partners and activities through a build-in virtual exhibition rooms (and/or by using VR/AR equipment);
  - Stay open to create on-demand content so that virtual attendees can access it at a more convenient time.

- **Build a community:** onsite attendees have the benefit of experiencing the community firsthand at an event. It is much easier for them to network in-person, have organic conversations, and establish connections. However, suggested ways to bring this community to your virtual time and content are featured through the networking engagement platforms. Encourage virtual networking sessions through Brella, Expertshare, etc.

- **Secure support through founders/sponsors** (through Mobile app banner ads, Push notifications, Sponsored sessions, Event website sponsors page, Physical and virtual sponsor booths, Sponsored commercials before accessing on-demand content, Analytics).

Figure 11: Visual to Illustrate the run-up to the virtual event

6 Cost/Benefit Analysis

In the below table, we make a general cost/benefit analysis regarding the implementation of the creative concept during the various types of events we propose above: large-scale events, small-scale events, and virtual/hybrid events.

	Large-scale events In-person only	**Large-scale events in-person with hybrid element**	**Small-scale events In-person only**	**Small-scale events with hybrid element**	**Virtual events**
Description	*Exhibitions or fairs with more than 500 participants*	*Exhibitions or fairs with more than 500 participants and a hybrid element to which participants can follow the event online.*	*Focused events with 50 to 100 participants*	*Focused events with 50 to 100 participants and a hybrid element to which participants can follow the event online.*	*Focused events with undefined number of online participants, and/or with selected audience in studio.*
Reach	High	High	Low	Low-Medium	Medium
Budget	High >50k EUR	High >50k EUR	Medium [15k EUR – 50k EUR]	Medium [20k EUR – 60k EUR]	Low [5kEUR – 10kEUR]
Engagement	Medium	Medium	High	High	Low
Credibility	High	High	High	High	Medium
Impact on reputation	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Risk of cancelation due to corona	Medium	Low – hybrid part may remain	Medium	Low – hybrid part may remain	None

The above table indicates that each type of events has its costs and its benefits:

- for a higher financial cost, large-scale events will reach more people, have a higher impact on LASTING's reputation and will build credibility of the program;
- at a medium financial cost, small-scale events will have a lower reach, however, will obtain a higher engagement and will keep a high level of credibility;
- virtual/hybrid events are attractive because of their relatively lower cost and the near-zero risk of cancellation due to the Covid-pandemic. However, there is a generalised fatigue of virtual events, and therefore it will take effort to promote participation.

Based on this analysis, we recommend a mix of large-scale and small-scale events, that include a hybrid component. This combines the benefits of the different options, which will be greater than the sum of its parts. We will perform a more detailed cost/benefit analysis for the selected events, considering the necessary investment in terms of resources, potential outcomes (i.e. reach, engagement, credibility).

7 Communication and Dissemination Support

To maximise the utility of the LASTING creative concept as well as the visibility of the project at each event, every event participation shall be conceptualized as its own sub-project. As such, in terms of communication and to help spread the LASTING messages, every event will encompass three phases: pre-event, event and post-event actions, each supported by different communication tools and channels.

7.1 Pre-event

In the lead up to any chosen event that one or more of the project partners will attend in the name of LASTING, the production and use of a short teaser or GIF, enticing participation in the event, that can be deployed across the project as well as partners' social channels are envisioned. Such a visual shall always entail or be accompanied by the phrasing "Meet us there / See you there" and feature the official hashtag of the event (e.g., #SMMfair) to encourage participation.

A further element to be deployed pre-event – if deemed appropriate based on cost-benefit and in the interest of the project partners – is a social media lead-up with targeted ads. The ads shall target waterborne stakeholders (specific to the event in question, e.g., if ports fair then ports stakeholder, etc.) in the region of the respective event (or multiple regions in case of large fairs) and encourage them to attend the event and get to know LASTING. Targeted ads could especially help drive visibility and LASTING's stakeholder interaction for hybrid or fully online events, where the barriers to attending for stakeholders is considerably lower than for in-person events.

A last element that can be deployed pre-event is an update (mini news article) on the news section of the LASTING website, reproducing which event will be attended, how LASTING fits the event, and key research findings of LASTING that relate to the theme / waterborne segment targeted by the event.

Tools: Targeted Ads (Paid social media), GIFs, Teaser.

Channels: Social Media, Website News Section.

7.2 Event

During the event, focus will be put on elements that have been outlined under the respective event types in the preceding chapters.

In terms of social media, an element that can be employed during in-person events can be "Live" Reporting by the LASTING attendees of the event, where they record short videos that they then share over social media, relaying key (event specific) LASTING messages and giving the LASTING social media audience a look into how things are "on the ground". This communicates the openness of LASTING for dialogue, makes the project seem approachable, and gives it a personal touch.

Tools: "Live" Reporting – Mini-Selfie Video (on the ground reporting).

Channels: Social Media.

7.3 Post event

The post event communication and dissemination actions will be focused on providing a summary of the event, recapitulate the main take-aways, as well as a statement by LASTING's representative that attended the event.

A summary of the event together with the sheet with the main take-home points (interactions, key figures, most interesting quotes, etc.) shall be provided and shared with mapped stakeholders (WP2) and new connections established during the event in a post-event update mail. The take-home points fact sheet can equally be used and disseminated on social media over LASTING's and the partners' channels, raising visibility about LASTING's engagement at fairs and providing non-visitors an overview of the event.

Lastly, for larger events a post-event video can be envisioned, that uses event footage, shows LASTING's engagement with attendees, and provides some quick facts about the event and the waterborne transport segments the event focuses on (cf. story board number three, p. 11-12). For smaller events, the LASTING representative who attended the event can provide a short video summary in selfie mode that can be shared, creating a personal element (audience gets a first-hand impression) as well as giving the diverse faces of LASTING and the waterborne sector some visibility.

Tools: Post-event video (for large scale events only), Take-home points sheet, Newsletter.

Channels: Mail (stakeholder list), Paid/Earned Media, Social Media, Website News Section.

8 Contribution to LASTING's Objectives

The creative concept shall, via its deployment at events and the accompanying pre-, during and post-activities on social media contribute to the two KPIs – 45% uptake in social media, 25% uptake in innovative research projects dealing with waterborne transport related activities in – outlined in the GA.

- Events present a natural way for social media hooks and to drive engagement due to the actuality, relevance, and opportunities for specific targeting each event provides. As such, the creative concept and its deployment at events will directly contribute to the 45% uptake in social media activity, with noticeable and measurable peaks during event participations, reflecting the presence and participation in strategic waterborne transport events;
- Direct contribution to the second KPI of 25% uptake in innovative research projects dealing with waterborne transport related activities cannot easily be quantified, and indirect measures such as event feedback, interest in the LASTING presence and number of interactions at the event, and follow-ups with connections established at the event shall serve as indicators.

It is also creating a sophisticated yet effective and reliable 'plug-and-play' event concept that will enhance the communication campaign of LASTING. This event concept will outlive the project and can be taken over by the main waterborne transport stakeholders for the promotion of the sector and its (RD&I) needs.

9 Conclusion

This document outlines the creative concept for representation of LASTING and the waterborne transport sector at events of different sizes, making specific recommendations for small, large, and hybrid/virtual events. The basis of LASTING's presence at all these events forms the 'Essential LASTING Pack' and its content and visuals, which together with the core messaging – leadership, sustainability, trust, now and green – is designed to drive awareness and interest for European RD&I among waterborne transport sector stakeholders.

For large-scale events, four different concepts to choose from have been outlined, that can be deployed for LASTING's and waterborne transport's presence at a booth or stand. They leverage the work done and insights gained from WP1 in various ways.

Additionally, the document outlines virtual/hybrid events as an opportunity for the LASTING project to be represented in a transformative and innovative way online/at e-events. This way it is providing detailed analytics, rescheduling flexibility, and increased marketability for the waterborne industry and stakeholders.

Finally, the document outlines that each event participation on the side of LASTING forms its own sub-project, with pre-event teasing, event presence, and post-event activities, to maximize the awareness objective and reach of each single event the partners decide to participate in.

This extensive and reliable 'plug-and-play' concept will be tested during the events and is foreseen to outlive the project, being taken over by Waterborne TP in promoting the interests and needs of the waterborne transport sector in the RD&I field.

Annex

CHECKLIST – 'LASTING ESSENTIAL PACK'

The 'Essential LASTING Pack' is **ideal for small-scale events** and forms a **strong base for larger scale events.** For online/hybrid events, the virtual backgrounds and videos are essential items. All three types of events can be further complemented with additional elements that fit with the specific type of event where LASTING is represented.

All display and visual materials of the pack are LASTING branded, and include:

- ◯ Roll-ups
- ◯ Video (introducing LASTING, can be played on a loop on the booth's screen)
- ◯ Event-specific branded flyers
- ◯ A PowerPoint template fitting the identity of Waterborne TP
- ◯ A backdrop for presentations / speaking opportunities
- ◯ Branded tablecloth
- ◯ Branded physical backdrop in the form of a banner (for in-person events)
- ◯ Branded virtual backdrop (for hybrid and virtual events)
- ◯ Writing utensils (pens, notepads, etc.)

CHECKLIST – ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS SMALL-SCALE EVENTS

- ◯ Posters for in-person events to be displayed in the venue
- ◯ Goodies/materials branded by TP / LASTING (and event partners, if co-organized) made from sustainable materials
- ◯ Pamphlets and fact sheets

CHECKLIST – ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS LARGE-SCALE EVENTS

- ◯ Stand concept (mirror or lighthouse option)
- ◯ Goodies/materials branded by TP / LASTING (and event partners, if co-organized) made from sustainable materials
- ◯ Pamphlets, infographics, and fact sheets
- ◯ Streaming equipment
- ◯ Tablets and touch-screens
- ◯ Posters with QR codes
- ◯ Banners and back-drop walls
- ◯ Goodies

CHECKLIST – ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS FOR ONLINE/HYBRID EVENTS

- ◯ Live streaming
- ◯ A branded background/backdrop for online presentations / speaking opportunities
- ◯ Avatar/online interspace designer with LASTING branding