

# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY



In partnership with the Communications Professionals in Philanthropy Network, the European Foundation Centre undertook a benchmarking study to better understand how EFC members are communicating strategically and leveraging different tools. This report reflects the results through September 2019. The survey remains open all year for EFC members who would like to participate. Indeed, adding to the data set is important to build the body of knowledge on the sector but also for the respondents to compare their own practices to the ones of their peers. If you would like to be part of this study please contact the EFC Knowledge Hub (at [lpaturzzi@efc.be](mailto:lpaturzzi@efc.be)).

**41**  
RESPONSES

FROM

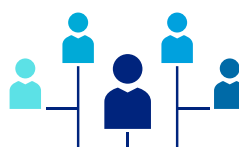
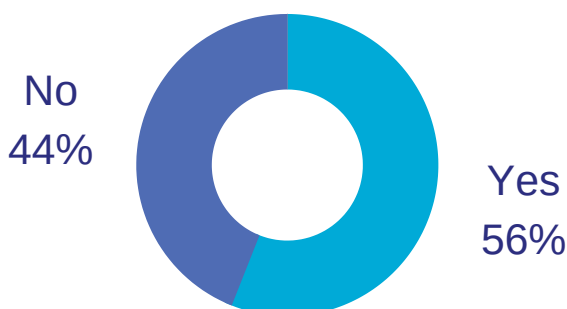
**19**  
COUNTRIES

## TOP 5 AREAS OF WORK

- 49%  Education
- 49%  Health
- 44%  Socioeconomic development
- 41%  Arts & Culture
- 37%  Environment

*Percentage of respondents active in the different areas, more than one response possible*

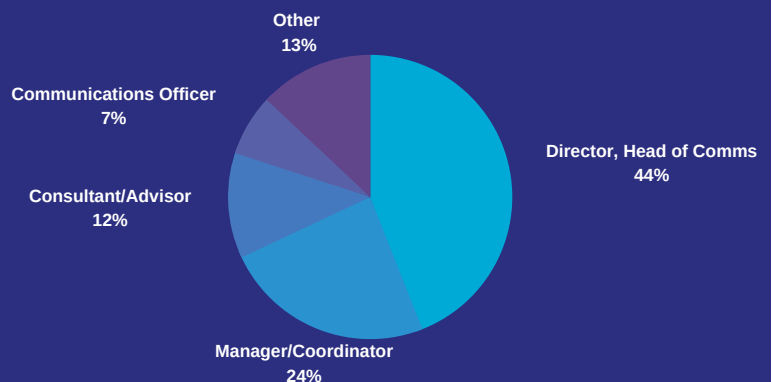
## ALREADY PART OF THE EFC COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY NETWORK?



At least 1/4 of respondents are also involved in other communications networks that are active at a national level

## POSITION OF RESPONDENTS

The largest group of respondents have been communications professionals at Director or Head of Communications level (44%) followed by Manager/Coordinator (22%).



# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY

## COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET



Most respondents (73%) do not have a dedicated budget for their communications activity: some envisage a specific sum for communication in all their projects. For those who have a budget:

The largest number have less than €50,000

One respondent has more than €2,000,000

## COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

The average number of staff dedicated specifically to communications is

**3.83** 

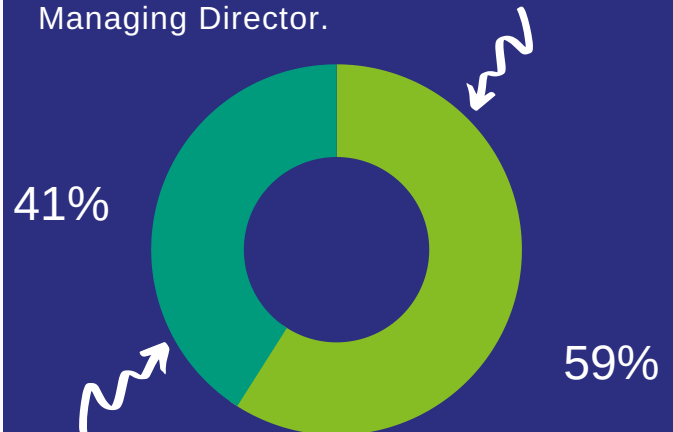
FTE

### COMMUNICATIONS KEY PRIORITIES IN 2019

- Communicate organisation's **values and impact**, and **strengthen profile**
- **Raise awareness** about projects and activities and their impact
- Create new website and other **communications collateral**
- **Professionalise** communications, develop **strategies**
- Specific priorities: Reach **new audiences**, deepen **co-worker engagement** and integrate **SDGs**

### REPORTING TO WHOM?

The largest group of respondents (59%) indicated that they report directly to the President/CEO or Managing Director.



Other respondents report to the Executive Board, Senior Advisers, Director of Policy, etc.



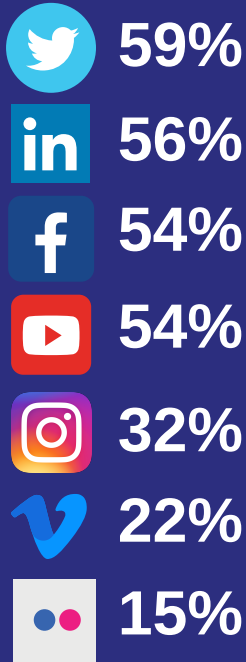
### ROLES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Respondents have listed the following as main roles of their communications department:

- Plays an essential role in the development and implementation of the organisation's strategy
- Contributes to the creation of the shared objectives of the organisation
- Supports the key tasks of the foundation and grantee's communications capacity, including transparency, visibility and awareness-raising
- Covers 360 degrees of effective communication - from strategy to execution and measurement
- Supports the positioning of the organisation towards stakeholders

# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY

## WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA DO YOU USE?



## WHICH OTHER DIGITAL CHANNELS?

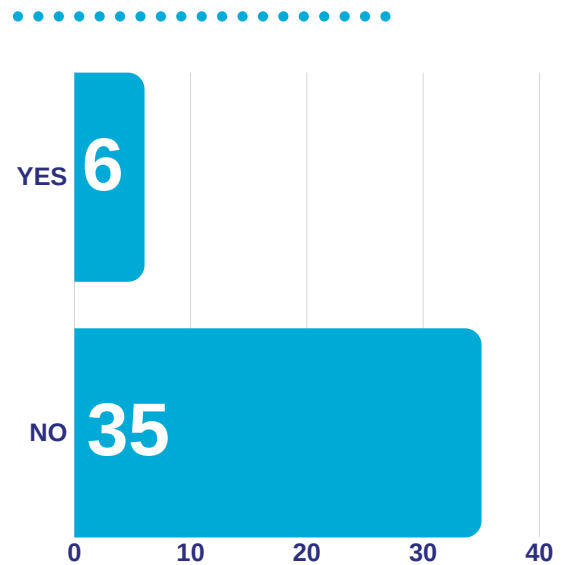


## NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS



The most frequent notification system in use, **by 27% of respondents**, is Facebook, followed by SMS, Google Alerts, Foresight and Chatboxes.

## HAVE YOU DEVELOPED AN APP?

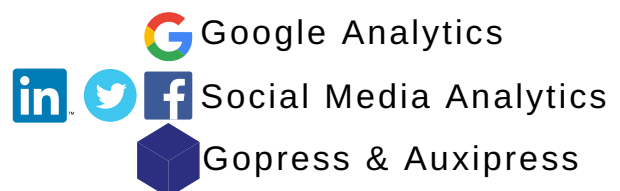


## AI / BOT

Only **2** respondents use BOT or Artificial Intelligence Systems



Use analytics and metrics from their website/social media such as



# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY

## 46%

of respondents have a crisis communications policy and procedure



### ONE RESPONDENT SAID:

*"In any communications initiative you need to be equipped with a crisis policy and procedure. A specific spokesperson at our foundation is in charge to manage potential crisis with the help of our external agencies to support with previously shared protocols. Q&As are always developed and/or updated to accompany any initiative."*

## 51%

of respondents assess their public perception

Through perception studies, surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, qualitative evaluation of performance, external reviews, media monitoring, social media metrics, and analytics



## 39%

of respondents have partnered with media

The main reasons to build partnerships with media are visibility, publicity, promotion of campaigns, media coverage, editorial support, media expertise, PR, and keeping up-to-date with the activities of the foundation.



# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY

Almost half (44%) of respondents have run one or more campaigns: They are indeed used in addition to other communications channels to increase the visibility of the work of the foundation; to reach and engage target audiences; and to raise awareness on specific issues, among others. Below are some examples of recent campaigns that have been launched or supported by EFC members who have responded to this survey:

## SHEDECIDES

The Children Investment Fund

SheDecides is a global movement to promote, provide, protect and enhance the fundamental rights of every girl and woman. The Children Investment Fund supported the campaign to draw attention to the SheDecides movement and encourage supporters to sign the SheDecides manifesto. Assets included the organisation's website, videos and infographics, deployed on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram with paid promotion.

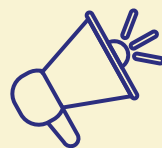
[www.shedecides.com](http://www.shedecides.com)

## #SHIFTTHEPOWER

The Global Fund for Community Foundations

#ShiftThePower: a short, inclusive hash tag was developed as the rallying cry for the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, held in 2016, which speaks to both north-south dynamics around resource flows and systems of accountability, as well as the need to avoid creating southern "gatekeepers," or overly centralised centres of local power. It has captured the minds of many around the world who want to see development done differently.

[#ShiftThePower](https://www.facebook.com/ShiftThePower)



**44%**

**of respondents  
have run a  
campaign**

## GOOD CAUSE CAMPAIGN

Ikea Foundation

Each year IKEA co-workers and customers join together in two campaigns to help create a better everyday life for the less fortunate. The campaigns raise money for UNICEF, Save the Children and UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency. The money goes to good causes like improving children's education and providing renewable energy in refugee camps. The campaigns also create awareness of the problems and the work being done to solve them.

[www.ikea.com/ms/en\\_US/good-cause-campaign](http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/good-cause-campaign)

## VERRIJK JE BUURT

Fonds 1818

Through "Verrijk je buurt" (Enhance your neighbourhood) Fonds 1818 aimed to reach a small group of citizens with ideas for a better society. The aim of the campaign was to help them turn their plans into concrete projects. The foundation utilised its social media, free publicity space in media plus its own magazine and digital newsletter, in addition to local stakeholders and key people. 25 inspiration sessions were organised around the region where locals were invited to propose their ideas. This campaign highly enhanced the visibility and awareness of the work of Fonds 1818 among locals. 85% of the 500 requests received were granted.

<https://verrijkjebuurt.fonds1818.nl/>

# COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS IN PHILANTHROPY - BENCHMARKING SURVEY

## OPEN CHALLENGES

Respondents have indicated a number of challenges they encounter in their work, which can be summarised as follows:

- Demonstrating and communicating effectively the **value** of philanthropy and its **impact** in societies
- Defining and/or widening the organisation's **audience**
- Generating **media** and public attention
- Ensuring that the organisation's **branding** and overall communication reflects its **value and mission**
- Utilising communications assets **effectively**
- **Positioning** the organisation towards its stakeholders
- Building **trust**
- Redressing the lack of **funding** for communications among NGOs and other grantees
- Managing service **delivery** while building communications strategies to achieve the organisation's **goals** more broadly

## SOME TIPS FROM 2019 RESPONDENTS

- Be consistent
- Only promote your own foundation's brand where it actually makes a difference
- Always keep in mind who your audience is
- Training staff to have a communications mindset can have many positive effects
- Every word counts — check with your partners before you communicate about them
- Positive and values-based communications, as well as good storytelling, can help inspire others to action
- Keep learning and getting inspired everywhere by everybody

## ABOUT THE NETWORK



The Communications Professionals in Philanthropy Network provides a trusted and safe space for communications professionals from EFC members to strengthen existing relationships with peers and to build new ones, share knowledge and practices and co-develop solutions on issues of common interest. The Communications Professionals in Philanthropy Network is part of the EFC's ongoing commitment to improving peer-learning and collaboration among its members, as outlined in the EFC Strategic Framework 2016-2022. For more information contact Stefanos Oikonomou, Thematic Networks Coordinator at [soikonomou@efc.be](mailto:soikonomou@efc.be)