CATALYSE

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Abstract:

This document presents the stakeholder engagement strategy for the CATALYSE project, which aims to accelerate the adoption of innovative applications for food safety. The strategy focuses on building a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder needs and perspectives. Strategy involves two phases. First, we identify relevant networks, organizations, and individuals, engaging them as project stakeholders. Second, utilizing the 5Ws (who, what, where, when, why) and H (how) model, we implement a multifaceted engagement plan comprising of five different ways to engage with stakeholders. Those engagement activities include survey and structured interviews, interactive meetings including conference sessions, online and in-person workshops. All foreseen activities will encourage Stakeholders (SH) to join Community of Practice (CoP) to foster connections, experience sharing, and stakeholder contributions to the project's success. This comprehensive approach, built upon the 5Ws and 1H model, sets a strong foundation for Work Packages 3,4,5,6 and paves the way for the project's successful contribution to food safety innovation.

1. Introduction:

This document is formulating a strategic approach for engaging stakeholders (SH), has context menu, ensuring effective interaction with key groups in Science, Society, and Policy domains. Active involvement and collaborative creation with stakeholders are imperative, aiming to establish a thematic network and develop pertinent content and initiatives that align with the SH community's expectations and requirements. Figure 1 shows the ideal stakeholders of interests for the CATALYSE project.

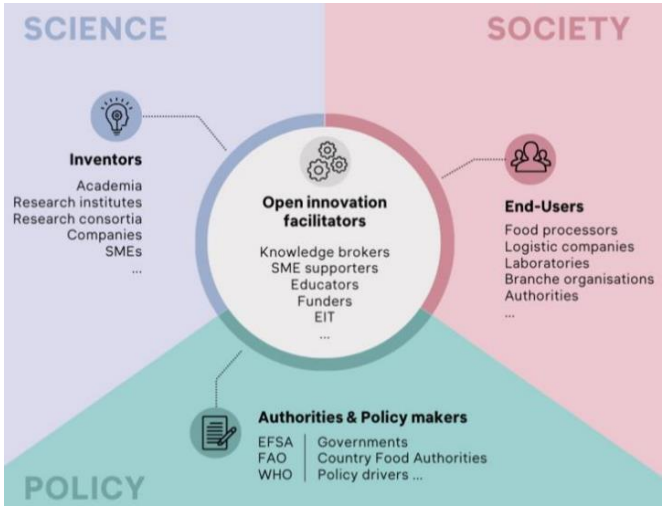

Figure 1. Stakeholders of interest for CATALYSE

An Engagement Strategy and Plan following the existing 5 Ws (what, when, where, why, who) plus an H (how) model will be developed and implemented. This will indicate which networks, organizations and people to be involved, possible events where to meet the

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stakeholders thus identified, timing of the forthcoming activities. Regarding the H (how), partners will be inspired by best engagement practices recommended by the main authorities in the field (see EFSA Engagement Toolkit Methods, tips, and best practices to design effective participatory processes).

2. Objectives of Stakeholder plan (WHY):

As such, WP2 will identify, engage and interact with SH to set a solid starting basis for WP3, 4, 5 and 6 and recruit them to the community of practice (WP4). All actions in the plan aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Understand barriers and levers of Stakeholders in terms of implementation of food safety innovative applications, knowledge exchange and education and training in order to develop a relevant Work Package (WP) content.
- To identify and select areas in food safety for CATALYSE to focus on to be more impactful and resource efficient.
- Set the basis for sustainable long-lasting engagement and participation list of the SH to the CATALYSE platform and the CoP (community of practice).
- Communicate about CATALYSE (together with WP8).

3. Stakeholder Identification (WHO): PHASE I

The stakeholder engagement strategy is divided into two phases. Phase I constitutes of defining key stakeholder groups for each dimension namely Academia/Research Institute, Industry, Policymaker / Public Authorities / Government and Civil Society. This shall help to identify specific networks, organizations, and individuals within each group of interest to target. The stakeholder categories shall be further classified in specific domains for analytical approach of the information received from action plan (surveys / structured interviews) mentioned in Phase II. A non- exhaustive list of proposed stakeholders to contact and engage will be prepared to be shared with the consortium. Phase I aims to end by M3.

4. Overview of actions (What/When/Where/How): PHASE II

The different actions are summarized in Table 1 and elaborated in the subchapters. For each action examples, but not exclusive list, of the following information will be provided:

- what the action is
- who of consortium partners will execute the action
- when will the action take place
- where will the action take place
- how will the action be executed

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The 6 concepts specified in the strategic and innovation plan for Food Safety published by Flanders Food (https://www.flandersfood.com/en/world-class-food-production/food-safety) are transversal themes that come back in the each action. The 6 concepts are:

1. Understanding - Create understanding and appreciation of food safety
2. Tech-enabled - Incorporate technology into a food-safe work environment
3. Farm to fork risks - Make food safety more sustainable and connected
4. Trend risks - Create support for demand-driven food safety problems
5. Pathogen control - Monitor the presence and growth of pathogenic microorganisms
6. Clean production - Monitor hygiene to control food safety

The plan below specifies the basic action required to achieve the minimum data sample to represent SH needs. As the quantity and quality of information is important, the engagement strategy will have an opportunistic approach: whenever a partner meets a relevant SH, they are encouraged to use any of the actions below as they see fit. When attending events, partners should have brochures and flyers informing of the project and containing a QR code to the survey with them. Communication about CATALYSE on social media will be done with CATALYSE project account and partners accounts tagging CATALYSE and posting relevant content.

Table 1. Stakeholder engagement strategy overview utilizing the 5W1H model

Why?	What?	Who?	When?	Where?	How?
Understand needs of SH to develop relevant WP content	Structured interview (200)	All of us	*Any time*	Anywhere	Orally >> record minutes *via* form
	Survey (100)	All of us	*Q1-Q2*	Anywhere/ Everywhere	During meetings By email At booth from events Polls on LinkedIn Social Media
To identify key focus areas of CATALYSE	Interactive online SH Workshop	ILSI Europe	*Q2 (23 May and 13 June)* *Q3-4 (10 Oct and 28 Nov)*	online	Interactive workshop using digital meeting platforms
Recruit to CoP Communicate about CATALYSE (together with WP8)	In person Workshops at events (not in the program)	ILSI Europe, all partners	*IAFP* *ILSI Europe Annual symposium* *Food Revolution*	May 2024 Geneva, CH 17-18 September 2024, Denmark 21-23 October Parma, IT	*Via* networking Interactive, engaging and structured workshop
	Session inside conference program	ILSI Europe, all partners	*ILSI Europe Annual symposium*	17-18 September 2024, Denmark	Session dedicated to Food Safety and CATALYSE

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4.1 Survey:

Digital survey to anonymously collect SH Information **(What)** in Q1-Q3 **(When).** The survey will be based on collecting information revolving around the six strategic and innovative Food Safety themes published by Flanders Food (Understanding, Tech-enabled, Farm to fork risks, Trend risks, Pathogen control, Clean production). The QR code to the survey will be shared *via* Social Media of the project and amplified by consortium partners. Examples of other opportunities to share the survey are at booths at events, sessions during in person meeting or conference, during online meetings. Project-branded templates, flyers, brochures, short videos, and PowerPoints slide will be provided **(Where, How).** All consortium members will share the survey and we expect a progressive expansion by SH referral **(Who)**.

By default, the survey is anonymous. In order to recruit SH to the CoP and following GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) rules and any applicable European and national legislation, survey participants are invited to leave their name and contact details. Data collection and storage will be according to GDPR rules and any applicable European and national legislation. As an incentive to provide their contact details, the report and consequent actions of the SH survey will be shared. The target amount of Survey responses is 100 covering a target ratio (15% civil society, 15% governments, 30% industry, 30% academics) of 4 SH groups. Data will be assembled by ILSI Europe, analysis and drawing key conclusion will be done together with WP3,4,5 and 6 leaders.

4.2 Structured SH interviews:

Harmonized Interview Protocol, adapted to the 4 stakeholder groups (Scientific Community, Industry, Policy makers and Civil society) to collect information from individual SH **(What)**. The interview protocol shall be well synchronized with the surveys conducted following the six strategic and innovative food safety themes by Flanders Food (Understanding, Tech-enabled, Farm to fork risks, Trend risks, Pathogen control, Clean production).

Interviews will be performed Q1-Q3 **(When)** at any occasion (e.g. events or online meeting) **(Where).** If the SH gives his/her consent, the content of the conversation, name and affiliation of interviewed stakeholder is ideally recorded, and the transcription shared with 1 up to 4 consortium members. If a recording and transcription isn't possible, key information capture during the conversation should be shared *via* online form as soon as possible with WP2 leader. Link to online form will be available on SharePoint and in email signature of WP2 leader **(How).**

By default, the interview is anonymous. To recruit SH to the CoP and following GDPR rules and any applicable European and national legislation, survey participants are invited to leave their name and contact details. Data collection and storage will be according to GDPR rules and any applicable European and national legislation. As incentive to provide their contact details, the report and consequent actions of the SH survey will be shared. ILSI Europe is set to launch a contest within all consortium members to acknowledge the

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member who collects the highest number of interviews. The announcement of the winner will be made on various CATALYSE social media channels. The target number of interviews is 200 covering a target ratio (15% civil society, 15% governments, 30% industry, 30% academics) of 4 SH groups.

An online training session for all partners on the interview protocol is foreseen to ensure that partners can effectively replicate the protocol (Q1), maximizing data collection for Task 2.1. to conduct Structured interviews with identified stakeholders across the Industry, Science, Society, and Policy dimensions. We will collect valuable insights using the co-created protocol ensuring compliance with GDPR data privacy regulations. We will inform interviewed stakeholders about the social media presence of CATALYSE project, its strategy to move forward with a comprehensive CoP designed on basis of concrete data received through these SH engagements. This shall be followed by encouragement to participate in the CoP for ongoing dialogue and collaboration of the SH. Analyse collected data to identify key themes, priorities, and needs. Data will be assembled by ILSI Europe, analysis and drawing key conclusion will be done together with WP3,4,5 and 6 leaders. Assigned reviewers will check whether collected data is of sufficient quality and if there are doubts, interviewed persons will be contacted to clarify. Use findings to inform the development of the CATALYSE strategy and programming. Share results with partners and stakeholders.

4.3 Online Stakeholder workshop:

Interactive and participative online workshop **(What)** performed twice in Q2 (Thursday 23 May and Thursday 13 June) and in Q3-4 (Thursday 10 Oct and Thursday 28 Nov) to share results with SH **(When)** online **(Where)** *via* online meeting software (Teams) **(How).**

After Introduction of the CATALYSE project, the consortium and the concepts adopted from strategic and innovation themes for Food Safety published by Flanders Food (Understanding, Tech-enabled, Farm to fork risks, Trend risks, Pathogen control, Clean production), SH will be invited to provide their understanding needs, priorities and barriers & levers in terms of food safety innovative applications, knowledge exchange and education and training (main focus of workshops in Q2). For online Workshop in Q3-Q4, preliminary results of SH interactions will be provided. The workshop will build upon these preliminary results.

- Depending on the number of SH and representation of the different SH group, an adapted animation will be foreseen
- After in depth discussion with SH, next steps will be provided
- Invitation to CoP, encouragement to follow Social Media (SM) of CATALYSE will be incorporated
- SH will be informed of the dates of upcoming events/trainings/project activities

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- SH will be invited to refer colleagues or relevant SH to the project and CoP

Target number of participants per workshop will be 15. This number will ensure a satisfactory amount of SH while avoiding too many participants.

4.4 In person workshops at events:

Face-to-face events such as breakfast meeting, focus group over a post-event drink **(What)** at specific events **(When) (Where)** by engaging with Stakeholders **(How).** In-person workshops will be organized in a similar manner to the online version with more emphasis on an interactive environment.

SH will be invited to provide their understanding of needs, priorities, and barriers & levers in terms of food safety innovative applications, knowledge exchange and education and training. In person workshops will utilize a mix of presentations, discussions, group work, case studies, hands-on exercises with help of collaborative platforms, polling software, interactive presentations, or digital whiteboards to encourage participation and maximize output information. The concept of the workshop is World Café. Participants will be divided into six groups (Understanding, Tech-enabled, Farm to fork risks, Trend risks, Pathogen control, Clean production) and seated at six tables for 7min at each table. At the end of the 7min, each member of the group moves to a different new table. Each table will have an assigned animator that greets new group and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round. After the small groups were visited by all participants, individuals are invited to share insights from their conversations with the rest of the workshop (https://theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/).

- Depending on the number of SH and representation of the different SH group, an adapted animation will be foreseen inspired by the EFSA engagement toolkit
- After in dept discussion with SH, next steps will be provided
- Invitation to CoP, encouragement to follow SM of CATALYSE will be incorporated
- SH will be informed of the dates of upcoming events/trainings/project activities
- SH will be invited to refer colleagues or relevant SH to the project and CoP

To empower and facilitate the implementation by consortium partners, templates and protocols will be provided to be adapted based on the number of participants (in collaboration with ILSI Europe). Target number of participants per workshop is 30. This number will ensure a satisfactory amount of SH with avoiding too many participants. First in person workshop will take place 2nd of May 2024 in Geneva after IAFP meeting, second during Food Revolution in Parma 22nd of October 2024, and further workshops

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may be organized during the first year of the project depending on the need of the project by CATALYSE partners.

4.5 Session within conference program:

Panel discussion at events (**What)** at the time of specific event **(When) (Where)** *via* discussion over critical topics for the consortium **(How).** A session dedicated to CATALYSE stakeholders will be organized at ILSI Europe annual symposium, 17th -18th of September 2024 and one more session to be declared upon consortium decision. The session will include 3 panelists and a moderator.

Below a proposal for the session is outlined. This proposal should be adapted to the conference audience. Speakers will be defined upon availability and other logistical aspects (e.g: language needs for talk). Proposed session structure is to have two lectures followed by panel discussion:

- From food safety innovation to practical solutions: such a session will allow exploration of how research innovation translates into real-world applications, UCSC supports alignment with CATALYSE project's focus.

- Shaping the future of food safety: This could emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement, incorporating CATALYSE core objectives and bringing SH opinions to the light.

- A panel discussion engaging around the topic of emerging food safety challenges and opportunities for innovation. This panel discussion will give insights into the CoP.

The session could end with a presentation of the CoP and how this CoP will support research & innovation. This will at the same time be an invitation to the audience to join the CoP. The inclusion of individuals in the CoP shall follow governance model presented by WP4 and WP5.

5. Overview of events at which Consortium partners will engage with Stakeholders:

An overview of events identified by CATALYSE consortium partners, taking place in 2024 at which we will engage with different stakeholder groups, a form of the interaction and responsible partner for carrying out the task will be portrayed on an excel file shared with the members of the consortium. All partners should be in possession of brochures and flyers informing about CATALYSE and with QR code for the survey when attending events provided by WP8. ILSI Europe will be available to support and coordinate the activities organized by the consortium partners. The following list of events is not limited to its scope; adaptation and addition may be done over time with Consortium partner support.

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6. Timeline:

Develop the stakeholder engagement strategy by February. Develop interviews protocol and conduct partner training and stakeholder interviews as planned in Q1, conduct interviews throughout M3-M9. Develop the survey in Q1 and gather responses throughout M3-M9. Online workshops will be organized on Thursday 23 May, Thursday 13 June, Thursday 10 Oct and Thursday 28 Nov. In-person workshops will take place 1st of May 2024 (IAFP), 18th September (ILSI Europe Annual Symposium), 21 October 2024 (Food Revolution); and Session at the conference will take place at ILSI Europe Annual Symposium 17th-18th Sept 2024. Adapt the SH engagement strategy based on ongoing feedback and emerging needs. Below shown Table 2 describes the event timeline is the form of a gantt chart.

Table 2. Gantt Chart for WP2 Timeline

Overview of actions	Months											
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Develop Stakeholder strategy		D2.1										
Develop a Survey												
Develop Interviewing protocol												
Identify SH (Phase I)												
Action Plan (Phase II)												
Perform a training on interviews												
Perform SH interviews												
Gather Survey responses												
Online SH workshops												
In person workshops												
Session with Conference program												
Report of SH engagement activities												D2.2

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7. Monitoring & Evaluation:

Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement activities. The Project Executive Board will be supplied with a monthly update. Consortium members will quarterly be informed about the progression on SH engagement plan. Preliminary analysis of survey & interviews data will be shared with consortium in M6 and M9. Final analysis will be published in D2.2. in M12. Throughout the engagement of survey and interviews we will identify any underrepresented stakeholders and focus on engaging them in order to ensure balanced participation of different SH groups of interest.

Adaptation of the strategy based on evaluation findings and stakeholder feedback will be considered. The evaluation of the successful completion of SH engagement strategy can be identified by the following KPIs:

1. **Reach and Participation**:
    a. Number of stakeholders reached: number of stakeholders reached through different engagement activities, such as surveys (100), interviews (200), workshops (30 per workshop), session at the conference (80). Breakdown by SH group will be provided to show balanced participation.
    b. Participation rate: the participation rate for different activities, such as the response rate for surveys (80%), attendance rate for workshops (80%), interviews (90%) is calculated and acceptable.
    c. Geographical distribution: the geographical distribution of participating stakeholders is balanced and covers at least 75% of European Union countries.

2. **Data Collection and Analysis**:
    a. Number of completed surveys: the number of completed surveys is 100 with balanced representation across stakeholder groups.
    b. Number of conducted interviews: is 200 interviews across all four stakeholder groups with balanced representation.
    c. Quality of collected data: quality of collected data in terms of completeness, relevance, and clarity is satisfactory.

3. **Outcomes and Impact**:
    a. Understanding of stakeholder needs and priorities: the data collected (through survey and interviews) allows to identify key themes, priorities, and needs expressed by stakeholders regarding food safety innovation, knowledge exchange, and education/training.
    b. Recruitment to the CoP: the number of stakeholders who sign up for the CoP based on different engagement activities reaches 150.

4. **Overall success of WP2**:
    a. 100 surveys performed.
    b. 200 interviews performed.
    c. 4 online and 2 in person workshops organized.
    d. 2 sessions at conferences organized.
    e. 150 persons expressed willingness to join CoP upon launch.

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