



Communication Strategy

April 2018 - March 2019

Table of Contents

Section I. External Communication Strategy	3
1. Website	3
2. Social Media.....	5
3. Email Marketing.....	7
4. Media.....	7
5. Community Engagement	8
6. Quora Conversations	8
7. Digital Marketing Tools	9
8. Webinars.....	10
9. Online Petitions	10
10. Videos.....	11
11. LinkedIn Slideshare	11
Section II. Internal Communication Strategy.....	12
1. Events Calendar	12
2. Staff Dashboard.....	12
3. Mass Pop-Up on All Computers.....	13
4. Communication Nodal Officer for each Centre	13
5. Digital Repository on Local Server.....	14
Section III. Stakeholders.....	14

Section I. External Communication Strategy

Communication Channels & Message Frequency

1. Website

The CUTS website acts as the main public window into the activities and objectives of the organisation, and as such, it should offer a clear and comprehensive view of our work. Below mentioned are the To Do's to increase the traffic on the website:

- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO): It is important for our potential audiences be able to find us easily. A consistent SEO will help improve our website visibility and increase our online audience:
 - a. To shortlist keywords (most searched on Google & Bing) related to our work.
 - b. To use SEO technique to feature in the top 10 results when any of shortlisted keywords are being searched on Google and Bing.
 - c. Ensure the content, plugins and tools on the website are SEO friendly.
 - d. Ensure that the sites are on Content Management System (CMS) platform to increase SEO.

Frequency: To be monitored every fortnight and updated MONTHLY/or as required

Key People: IT team and Centre Head/Centre Deputy Head for providing keywords related to their uploads

- Blog: It is absolutely essential to have a blog on the website. The reasons follow:
 - a. Due to its social nature, it encourages the social interaction and keeps the user engaged.
 - b. It positions the authoring organisation as experts in the field.
 - c. It creates more entry points to the website's organic traffic. It is a proven way of successful content marketing and SEO.
 - d. It helps create a loyal base of audience, thereby creating brand ambassadors.
 - e. The blog with well-written articles, opinions, etc. adds value to the website and provides leverage over others in the game.
 - f. The blog may also include report highlights with link to the report, media releases, upcoming event information, event details etc.
 - g. The comments on the blog to be moderated by the publisher.

Each centre to update its Blog section every fortnight with at least one blog article on the scope and fields related to their work. All centre blog articles to be added to the Organisation's Blog section at the end of each week.

Frequency: To be updated every FORTNIGHT

Key People: Centre Head/Centre Deputy Head & IT team

- Donor Friendly: Websites are a great and convenient platform to solicit donations from donors both current and potential.
 - a. The website should be donor friendly. In simpler terms a simple and straightforward process for people to give us money.
 - b. Donation page to be prominently linked from the Home page. It can either be with the help of a special banner or highlighted button.

- c. Use a single page donation form to combat connectivity issues or time constraints at donors end.
- d. The donation page to be common for all centres.
- e. To set up a payment gateway on organisations website for receiving both national and international donations.

Frequency: *To be updated ONCE and monitored regularly.*

Key People: IT team and Finance Team

- Pop-ups: When using popups we will combine the useful with cost-effectiveness, giving them an attractive design with corresponding content. Apart from being effective, they are quite inexpensive to put into action.

A pop-up on the subject, we wish to promote/highlight like an upcoming event, newsletter, report, achievement, etc. can be created and embedded in the website of relevant centre and CUTS organisation website.

A pop-up window will open once the website homepage completes the loading process. These pop-up windows can be set to close automatically after 30 seconds of display and will also feature a close button, in case the user wants to close it manually.

Key People: Communications Officer & IT Team

Other important sections that need to be updated and monitored regularly are:

- News & Updates
- Calendar and Upcoming Events
- Media
- Publications
- A career section with separate opportunities for volunteers, internships and people looking for a full-time employment.

Frequency: *To be monitored DAILY and updated as per requirement.*

Key People: IT Team, Centre Deputy Head, Communication Nodal Officers and HR

- Prominent presence of the following Call-to-action (CTA) buttons on the homepage of CUTS and its centre websites:
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Donate
 - c. Subscribe for Email Updates
 - d. Subscribe to our e-groups
 - e. Subscribe to our Quarterly Newsletters
 - f. Share Testimonials
 - g. Social Media Icons

Key People: IT Team, Centre Deputy Head, Communication Nodal Officers and HR

2. Social Media

Platforms to create awareness, generate interest, encourage sharing, and enlist support and participation in our initiatives and projects.

- Facebook
 - a. *Page*: One dedicated page of each centre. The page's name should be uniform and generic for all the centres. Any pages or social media accounts should not be created without the consultation of Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Communications Officer.
 - b. *Profile Picture*: CUTS International's logo to be used as the profile picture. It shouldn't be changed unless the logo is updated.
 - c. *Cover Photo*: It is a dynamic section that can be used to highlight any achievement, promote an event or just a graphic related to the work of the centre. *The cover photo should be updated every month.*
 - d. *Posts*: *Multiple updates each week (ideally several per day or a minimum 3 to 4) to keep the followers engaged.* Posts related to any campaign, event, announcement, report, etc. should be in addition to the daily updates.
 - e. *About Us*: This section of the Facebook page should be monitored regularly and updated with the latest details.
 - f. *Graphics & Videos*: A graphic or a video should always be attached to the Facebook post as it ensures a better exposure and reach.
 - g. *Paid Advertising*: Periodic promoted posts or advertising campaign for excellent resources, upcoming events or any important messages. Furthermore, a budget for outreach initiatives such as social media should be included in the project proposal.
 - h. *Hashtags*: Each post to have relevant hashtags. Using hashtags allows the user to cut through the digital mess and focus on the information they are looking for.
 - i. *Tagging*: Tagging refers to using the username of an individual or organisation and links them to the post or photo. Important and relevant stakeholders/audience must be tagged in each post.
 - j. *Stakeholder Database*: Each centre to create, update and maintain a google sheet database of relevant stakeholders twitter handles.
 - k. *Pinned Post*: Important posts like Quarterly. Publications, announcement etc. to be pinned to the page

Frequency: To be updated DAILY

Key Person: Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Communications Officer

- Twitter
 - a. *Profile*: A dedicated profile of each centre. The profiles should be uniform and generic for all the centres. Any accounts should not be created without the consultation of Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Communications Officer.
 - b. *Profile Picture*: CUTS International's logo to be used as the profile picture. It shouldn't be changed unless the centre logo is updated.
 - c. *Header Image*: It is a dynamic section that can be used to highlight any achievement, promote an event or just a graphic related to the work of the centre. *The cover photo should be updated every month.*
 - d. *Tweets*: *Multiple updates each week (ideally several per day or a minimum 3 to 4) to keep the followers engaged.* Tweets related to any campaign, event, announcement, report etc. should be in addition to the daily updates.

- e. *Bio & About Us*: This section of the Twitter profile should be monitored regularly and updated with the latest details.
- f. *Graphics & Videos*: A graphic or a video should always be attached to a tweet as it ensures a better exposure and reach.
- g. *Paid Advertising*: Periodic promoted posts for excellent resources, upcoming events or any important messages. We get to define who we want to reach based on factors such as interests, age, location and more that meets our objective of either increasing awareness, reach or impressions a post etc. Pricing: Charged per engagement
- h. *Hashtags*: Each post to have relevant hashtags. Using hashtags allows the user to cut through the digital mess and focus on the information they are looking for.
- i. *Tagging*: Tagging refers to using the twitter handle of an individual or organisation and links them to the post or photo. Important and relevant stakeholders/audience must be tagged in each post.
- j. *Stakeholder Database*: Each centre to create, update and maintain a google sheet database of relevant stakeholders twitter handles.
- k. *Pinned Tweet*: Important posts like Quarterly. Publications, announcement etc. to be pinned to the page

Frequency: To be updated DAILY

Key Person: Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Communications Officer

Daily Messaging Topics for Social Media:

1. Research findings/summary, 2. International & National news, 3. Stories from the field, 4. Organization news/announcements, 5. Publications, 6. Job Postings and, 7. Articles published etc.
- YouTube
 - a. *Channel*: Each centre to have a dedicated YouTube Channel. The channels name should be uniform and generic for all the centres. Any accounts should not be created without the consultation of Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Communications Officer.
 - b. *Branding*: Consistent YouTube Branding and Layout. CUTS International's logo to be used as Channel Icon and channel art (header image) to be updated with a graphic promoting latest video upload. *The channel art to be updated monthly with each video upload.*
 - c. *Cross Sharing*: Video to be shared on the social platforms of the relevant CUTS Centre.
 - d. *Playlists*: Each video uploaded should be added to a relevant playlist. Playlists can be categorised by Event, Project, and Speaker etc.
 - e. *Public Views*: Ensure all videos, playlist and subscriptions are public. (Settings icon near Subscribe button on the YouTube Channel Art).
 - f. *Engage*: Enable Discussion Tab (for viewer engagement on our channels).
 - g. *Suggested Channels*: Add Channels relevant and related to the work done by CUTS.
 - h. *Cards & End Screen elements*: Use cards and end screen elements for each Video as they work great as incentives to get more views and clicks. Moreover, act as a great engagement tool.
 - i. *Video Details*: Create smart descriptions with key tags and titles.
 - j. *Embed in Centre Website*: Each video uploaded to YouTube channel to be embedded in the centre website under the Videos section.

Frequency of Video Upload: *To be uploaded WEEKLY*

Key Person: Centre Communication Nodal Officer, Communications Officer & IT team

3. Email Marketing

- **E-Forums:** General postings on key issues should be once a day. Periodic email blasts around any key issue/announcement; event, periodicals etc. should be as and when required, but shouldn't be more than twice a month.
- **Regular Monitoring:** The open & click-through rates are the most effective metrics to determine the performance of an email. Such metrics vary depending on the content, the frequency with which we send email, and whether or not people recognize our emails in their inbox.
- **Signature Banners:** Such banners are a form of display advertising, providing a prime opportunity for getting traffic to a specific webpage or document and increasing awareness.
A banner on the subject, we wish to promote/highlight like an upcoming event, quarterly periodicals, newsletter, report, achievement etc. can be created. It will further be inserted into the signature lines of relevant team members.

Frequency: *As per requirement*

Key person: E-Forum Moderators, Centre Deputy Heads, Communications Officer & IT team.

4. Media

To be effective in our mission, using the press and broadcast media is the most efficient form of communication for reaching out to the mass. They are conduits to our relevant audience - consumers or the general public, policy makers, commercial organisations, government, etc. And successful engagement with the media requires a deliberate consideration and more:

- **Prompt Response:** Ensure positive relationships are maintained with the local media by continuing to provide timely responses to requests for information.
- **Media Database:** Create and maintain a centralised Media database, which is updated from time to time.
- **Open Editorial:** Submit a regular feature to local print media of good news stories, opinions and reactions, articles around key local, regional, national and international issues & developments, etc. Word limit to not exceed more than 600 words.
- **Press Release:** Prepare and disseminate press releases on events, research findings, achievements, impact stories from the grassroots, etc. Word limit to not exceed more than 300 words.
- **Invite and Engage:** Invite media to events and important meetings. A personal invite via email or in-person is recommended.

Frequency: *As per requirement*

Key Person: Communications Officer and Centre Communication Nodal Officer

5. Community Engagement

Every stakeholder has the ability to provide valuable feedback within their area of expertise if the right questions are asked. It is imperative for us to build trust through transparency, especially with data and involve stakeholder groups as early as possible and keep them involved throughout the process. We need to:

- Provide numerous opportunities for informed and constructive feedback through timely Google Survey/Feedback Forms.
- Meet once every month, around compelling and strategic issues like Environment, Anti-competitive practices, etc.
- Share the engagement process across social platforms, e-forums and centre website. Photos, videos, infographics, podcasts, etc. can be used for the same.
- Tools that can be used for Community Engagement:
Inform: Website, E-forums, Social Media etc. | *Consult:* Polling, Surveys, etc. | *Involve:* Workshops, Focus Group Discussion, Open House, Online Petitions etc.

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Communications Officer and Centre Communication Nodal Officer and Project Team

6. Quora Conversations

It is a platform for people to ask and answer questions. And the community can respond by voting on which answers are most helpful.

1. Conversations to be initiated by the Quora page of CUTS International only. Also, each centre to nominate subject experts for posting new questions and answering in other related threads.

2. Quora profile should be fully filled with about, areas of expertise, interests, cities, schools and colleges attended and connect social media accounts). Below are some advanced parts of Quora that should also be carefully written and shouldn't be skipped at all:

- a. Mention the organisations name/credentials as close to the beginning/account name to make the most of the 60 characters made available.
- b. Users' about us or description section should contain hyperlinks and even @-mentions of other users.
- c. In addition, we can have an about us that includes topic/interest specific about us. Here we can mention our expertise in Trade, Regulations, and Economics etc. It'll be handy while answering questions.

All this will help other users find our Quora profile when searching for someone to answer their queries.

3. It is important to grow our network by following others on Quora by looking at the top answers and followers of interests/topics relevant to our work.

4. Search for the best and most apt questions to answer. It is not only a great way to get involved in the community but also to disseminate our output, create our brand presence and establish ourselves as subject experts. Following are few things to contemplate:

- a. Search for a topic that fits our area of interest or the one with meaningful stats.
- b. Look out for threads with lots of up votes. The up votes convey the number of times a question has been viewed. A highly up-voted answer here can lead to thousands of views per day and visit to our website and social media accounts.
- c. Find questions posted not long ago or have few or no answers. This gives us an opportunity of bubbling up to the top of the answers list.

5. Format answers in an eye catching way: Add images to our answers. Besides, we can also add some custom formatting to our answers/contributions, helping it be more readable and gain more up votes. Some formatting tips:: Bolding/italicizing headings, Create bulleted and numbered lists of points, text with web links, @-mentions of Quora users or topics.

6. Ask Questions related to our fields of interests.

7. Analytics: Quora shows a detailed breakdown of the following: Views, Up votes and Shares. It displays the above stats for each of the following categories: The questions we post, the answers we give and the blogs we write.

Frequency: On-going

Key Person: Subject Experts from each Centre

7. Digital Marketing Tools

a. *Sniply*: It is a neat tool that adds a call to action to any webpage & web document and drives traffic to our desired website, social media profiles, etc.

It works by allowing you to create a banner with a custom call to action. Once you finish setting up the banner, Sniply provides a unique link, which can be shared via e-forums, social media profiles, etc. All the people who will click on that unique link will be shown the banner. This service is free for up to 1000 clicks per month.

b. *AddThis* is a social bookmarking service that can be integrated into a website with the use of a customizable web widget. Once the widget is added, visitors to the website can bookmark or share an item using a variety of social networking and bookmarking sites, such as Facebook, Pocket, Pinterest, Twitter and WhatsApp. In a nutshell, it is a content sharing and social insights platform.

It also provides publishers with in-depth analytics. The basic tools are absolutely free to install and use.

c. *Share Link Generator*: These online tools help generate custom share links to any page or file you want to be shared directly from the source to the recipients' social media profiles.

Share Link tools:

<https://codebeautify.org/share-link-generator>; <http://www.sharelinkgenerator.com>

Frequency: On-going/DAILY

Key Person: Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer and IT team

8. Webinars

Webinars are the fastest way to get the attention of our ideal audience. The benefits attached with webinars are many, but the most important ones are: Cost-effectiveness, real-time engagement with audience/address questions, wide reach, convenience and an ideal tool for advocacy and promoting an idea.

Preparing and planning a webinar:

- Webinars to be planned on compelling topics and, actionable issues. The best way to choose a webinar topic is by gathering feedback from the target audience via survey forms.
- Expert Guests: Find and woo experts to be panellists for the webinar.
- Carefully plan like Webinar Title, description and guest list.
- A branded registration page with all webinars related details.
- Always, log in 30 minutes before the scheduled time and thank people who have joined early.
- Ask people to participate even before the webinar date by submitting questions to a specific email address. It will ensure participation and might also get us, extra registrants.
- Inform the target audience about the webinar via e-mails (invite e-mail) and social media. Webinar Invite should go at least a month in advance followed by weekly reminders.
- Record the Webinar. Post-webinar, fine-tune the recording and upload it to relevant Centres YouTube channel and embed the recording on the centre website.
- An e-mail should be sent informing the attendees, guests and others relevant stakeholders about the availability of the webinar recording link should be sent coupled with a feedback form.
- Some good software's that can be considered are: GoToWebinar, CISCO WebEx, AdobeConnect, AnyMeeting etc.

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Office, Team organising the webinar & IT team

9. Online Petitions

The campaigning tactic of petitioning is as old as time, but with the increase of digital technologies, this decade has seen the introduction of a number of major web initiatives for online petitioning. Online Petitioning is certainly a useful tool for CUTS to reach stakeholders and gain new supporters and advocates.

Online petitions aren't a silver bullet - any more than a Facebook page or Twitter accounts are. But within the context of creating awareness, advocacy, fundraising and communications, digital campaigning should form an integral part of the communication strategy.

People who sign the petition are prompted to share the petition with their comments on their social media profiles and with their contacts via email. This must also increase traffic and engagement on our twitter, Facebook and website apart from increasing our audience.

Centres in consultation with communication team to start online petitions for relevant projects/campaigns.

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Communications Officer and Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Project Team

10. Videos

According to a recent study, out of all the time spent on internet, 33% is spent watching video. That is huge. It clearly accentuates the importance of video communication and storytelling.

1. Social Media Live Streaming: Live Video Streaming of Events using the FB Live feature. A vendor to be hired for live streaming ensuring a smooth and seamless stream.
2. Report Intro: 1 minute long video bytes of authors/team producing a major report.
3. Event Video Recording: All Events to be recorded by a Professional Videographer and the recordings to be uploaded on the YouTube channel categorised by Sessions under a playlist.
4. Project based videos-Impact Stories: Project team to capture photos and shoot videos while on the field. Guidelines for each field visit to be different depending on various factors like nature of project, partner guidelines (if any etc.)

All the above videos to be uploaded on the official YouTube channel and further shared on Social Media, E-forums, WhatsApp etc.

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Centre, Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer & IT team

11. LinkedIn Slideshare

LinkedIn SlideShare is a Web based slide hosting service. Users can upload files privately or publicly in the following file formats: PowerPoint, PDF, or OpenDocument presentations. Over 70 million users, one of the 100 most visited websites around the world.

The content uploaded on SlideShare has incredible potential to reach the people we want to see and read our report with the help of title, keywords while uploading. Below is the approach to be followed:

- a. All major reports are uploaded on SlideShare.
- b. Each report to have an abstract/short description and keywords attached to it. The abstract and keywords related to the report to be provided by the report authors.
- c. Analytics: SlideShare provides comprehensive data on performance of the report on Slideshare like views, downloads, likes etc.

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Centre, Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer & Report Authors

Section II. Internal Communication Strategy

Communication Channels

1. Events Calendar

A CUTS Google Events Calendar on the upcoming internal and external events of each centre.

The events added to the CUTS Events Calendar to be highlighted in red and white combination. Moreover, all invited participants to receive a Calendar Invite from the organising centre with event notifications/reminders at the following intervals: 1 week, 1 day, 12 hours and 30 minutes. Also the organisation website should have an event registration module to engage participants for the events organised by CUTS.

Frequency: *On-going/As per requirement*

Key Person: *Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer & IT team*

2. Staff Dashboard

What? An online staff dashboard - Primary channel to engage and communicate with the staff with information & news tailored for the staff, like announcements, welcoming new recruits, birthdays & anniversaries, the employee of the month, etc. It'll also serve as an online resource platform for resources like HR related forms, CUTS and other logo's in various formats, IT guidelines, etc.

Cost: No cost incurred. A single webpage that can be built in-house within a week with no additional exposure or expertise required.

Time: 1 Week

Platform: WordPress, same as the one used for our new websites.

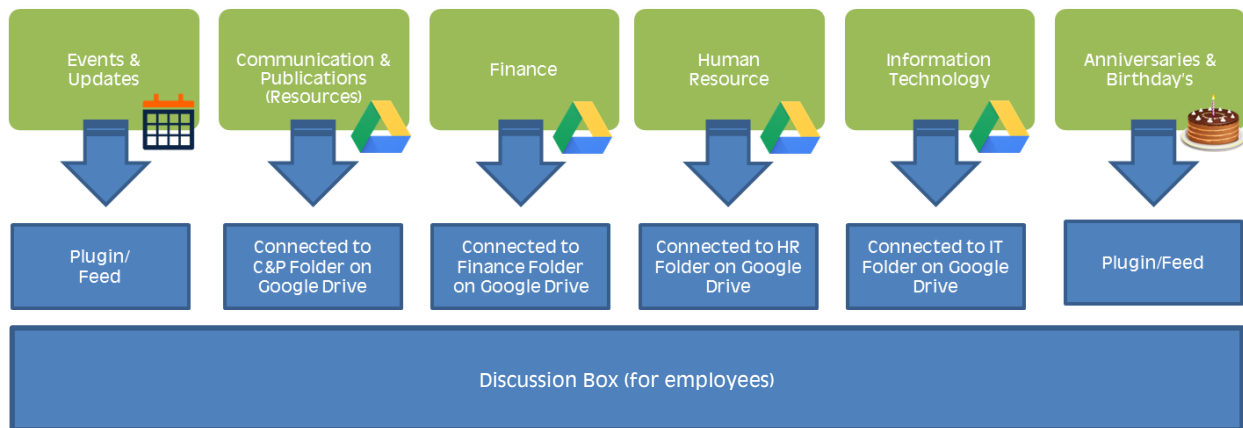
All Support functions including Communications, Finance, HR and IT will have a menu each hyperlinked to a dedicated folder in Google Drive. The drive will be managed by the concerned departments only and will have all resources concerning them.

Domain: Simple and unique domain address, which can only be viewed and accessed by employees with a cuts.org email address.

Frequency: *To be updated DAILY*

Key Person: *A sub admin role will be assigned to all the aforesaid depts. with super admin rights being with IT only. As sub-admin, the department will be able to edit the folder with necessary uploads from time to time.*

Staff Dashboard



3. Mass Pop-Up on All Computers

- Broadcast updates, event reminders etc. to all computers on the same network at any time. Send the critical information directly to the staff/team in the form of a desktop pop-up message that will appear on top of any other application or software.
- With Desktop Pop-ups/alerts the messages will never be missed or not read!

Frequency: As per requirement

Key Person: Communications Officer, HR & IT team

4. Communication Nodal Officer for each Centre

A communication associate at each centre will act as a liaison between the HO and the Centre to ensure smooth communication between all the centres. He/she will be responsible for the following:

1. Develop an event calendar and deliver a regular flow of updates and invites to relevant stakeholders from other centres on key centre events using google calendar invites and emails.
2. Assist with coordination of media outreach and coverage with media releases, reactions etc. and updating & maintaining the media database.
3. Assist with development and execution of dissemination plans/strategies to meet objectives, including collaboration with internal stakeholders.
4. Build and maintain a digital library of photos and videos of all centre related events. Also, coordinate photography for/of events, activities, etc. for use in publications, media, etc.

Key Person: Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer and USM

5. Digital Repository on Local Server

A digital repository for all the photos of the events organised by CUTS. The idea is to keep all the photos at one virtual location, thereby, easing out the exercise of finding photos post event for any work-related purposes like social media, for use in any publications, information management, etc.

The communication desk at each centre is responsible to ensure photography for each event. Once the event is over, the communication desk of the respective centre will upload the event photos in the Digital Gallery within 7 days from the date of the event.

The communication nodal officers at each centre to have the admin rights, whereas all other staff members are assigned view only rights. Users with view only rights can create an additional copy of any photo(s) they may require for work.

Where is the Digital Gallery?

The Gallery is a folder on Google Drive with centre wise sub-folders.

How can I access gallery?

You will be able to view the CUTS Digital Gallery folder under the "Shared with me" item on your CUTS Google Drive.

Frequency: To be updated within next 7 days from the date of the event.

Key Person: Communications Officer, Centre Communication Nodal Officer & IT team

Section III. Stakeholders

Internal

- Executive Committee
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Donors & Funding Agencies (Government Sector)
- Donors & Funding Agencies (Non-Government Sector)

External

- Beneficiaries (Community-Consumers)
- Media
- Members of Parliament
- Central Government Depts. (like Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Ministry of Skill Development & Empowerment etc.)
- State Government Depts.
- Regulatory Bodies (CCI, NABARD, TRAI, IWAI etc.)
- Industry Associations (like CII, NASSCOM, ASSOCHAM, etc.)
- Project Partners
- Potential Donors (Public & Private Sector)
- Non-Government Organisations
- Experts from Policy, Business, Academia, Government and Media