

ESREL SRA-E 2025 Roundtable Proposal

Communicating Risk to Raise Risk Know-How

Aim: To establish a community of practice in risk communication among organisations providing risk information, users and researchers across risk domains to raise risk know-how

This roundtable intends to lay the foundation of a risk communication community of practice by connecting three groups:

1. Researchers who work closely and directly with *decision-makers* at any scale, from national governments to individuals, in conducting risk assessment and risk communication studies, and who are seeking to broaden the reach and impact of their work.
2. Representatives of international and regional institutions which produce and communicate risk information to decision-makers, who are interested in how *academic research* and *direct engagement with users* can help them to do this better.
3. Frontline risk communicators – individuals and representatives of organisations who work to help their communities access, interpret and use risk information to take decisions, and who want to strengthen their capacity to do so by engaging with *information providers* and *academics*.

While an increasing number of institutions recognize their role in communicating risk information in ways that build the risk know-how of users, there are fewer examples of institutions that make continual efforts to understand how (and if) decision-makers are using the risk information they put out, and to evaluate the extent to which their risk communications enable stakeholders' decisions about how to act. These exemplary cases can provide inspiration and a benchmark for others.

Frontline risk communications often find it difficult to find relevant risk information that fully reflects the values and resources of their communities, addresses the multiple risks they face and equips them to make necessary trade-offs when taking decisions. They face time, funding and other constraints which make it difficult for them to look for and learn from other practitioners or researchers. However, some champions are doing this, and in the process can make it easier for others to articulate their needs.

Academics, meanwhile, often engage with risk information users in the course of their research, but may lack time and incentives to record their experiences and distil the lessons learned.

This roundtable will highlight exemplary cases of collaboration between organisations which communicate risk information, users and researchers from a range of different domains of risk – natural hazards, sea-level rise, chronic and infectious diseases, frontier technologies, food safety etc. This initial exchange of ideas and experience across stakeholders and areas of expertise will kickstart the Community of Practice.

The roundtable will be convened by the Institute for the Public Understanding of Risk (IPUR), National University of Singapore (Singapore), the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (Cambridge, UK) and Sense About Science (London, UK). It links to and builds on the Risk know-how Initiative (<https://riskknowhow.org>), an ongoing collaboration between Sense About Science and IPUR to build risk know-how, supporting communities to take informed decisions in the face of uncertainty.

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