

ESREL SRA-E 2025

Stavanger, Norway

14.45-16.00, 18 June 2025

Roundtable: Joining Forces for Risk Communication

Aim: To bring together practitioners and researchers working on risk communication to share experience and inspiration and discuss how to work together to raise risk know-how across different domains of risk

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 organisations which produce and communicate risk information to decision-makers and the public, 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 organisations recognize their role in communicating risk information in ways that enable users to take informed decisions, there are fewer document examples of strategic risk communication approaches, in which communicators draw on insights from academic research, evaluation of interventions and deep engagement with users to continuously improve their risk communications and amplify their impact on decisions.

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, etc. This initial exchange of ideas and experience across stakeholders and areas of expertise will kickstart a Community of Practice.

The roundtable will be convened by the LRF Institute for the Public Understanding of Risk (IPUR) at the 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, supported by Lloyd's Register Foundation.

Convenors:

Olivia Jensen, IPUR, Singapore. Contact: olivia.jensen@nus.edu.sg

Lara Mani, CSER, Cambridge, UK.

David Schley, Sense About Science, London, UK.

David Reid, Lloyd's Register Foundation

Chair: Tim Slingsby, Director of Skills and Education, Lloyd's Register Foundation (confirmed)

Agenda

Short presentations (5 mins) on collaborations between researchers and practitioners and lessons learned; what participants and their organisations could bring to a risk communications network, and what they would like to get from being part of the network.

- Lara Mani, CSER, UK. Communicating existential risks from natural hazards (confirmed)
- David Schley, Sense About Science, UK. Learnings for the risk comms community from the science comms community (confirmed)
- Olivia Jensen, IPUR, Singapore. Communicating risks at the coast (confirmed)
- Patricia Ruiz Guevara, Maldita.es, Spain Communicating about tech risks (confirmed)
- Dr Ulrika Björkstén, Secretary-General of Vetenskap & Allmänhet (Public & Science), Sweden. Bridging scientists, media and decision-makers (confirmed)
- Frederic Boudier, University of Stavanger, Norway. Academia-practitioner collaboration (confirmed)
- Sarah Dryhurst, UCL, UK. Communicating about disasters across sectors (confirmed)
- Polly Copeman, CSO, Lyse, Norway. academic and professional perspectives on communicating risk (confirmed)

Discussion: How can researchers and practitioners best work together to raise Risk Know-how in communities of all kinds?

The Roundtable will be preceded by a Joining Forces Reception for all speakers, participants and supporters (5.45-7.00pm, 17th June). Venue to be confirmed.