

SustainX

D.5.1 Marketing and stakeholders outreach plan document

Partner:

Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED)



March 2025



**Funded by
the European Union**

This project received funding from the European Union through grant agreement no. 101180410.

Deliverable Information

D.5.1 Marketing and stakeholders outreach plan document			
Work Package:	WP5 Project Management Plan		
Lead partner:	Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ)		
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Due date:	31/03/2025		
Version number:	1.0	Status:	Draft
Dissemination level:	Public		

Project Number:	101180410	Project Acronym:	SustainX
Project Title:	SustainX: Fostering Sustainable Digital Innovation Investment		
Start date:	1 January 2025		
Duration:	24 months		
Call identifier:	I3-2023-Cap2b		
Topic:	I3-2023-CAP2b		

Revision History

Revision	Date	Contributor(s)	Description
1.0	27/03/2025	DIZ feedback	Minor changes
2.0	19/08/2026	Georgia Lalou	GA number corrected

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Executive Summary

The SustainX Marketing & Stakeholder Outreach Plan serves as a comprehensive guide to increasing the visibility and engagement of SustainX through strategic communication and stakeholder involvement. This document details the marketing initiatives, outreach strategies, and key engagement mechanisms necessary for achieving long-term impact and sustainability.

The plan's primary objectives are to:

- Enhance Visibility: Promote SustainX across regional, national, and EU levels.
- Engage Key Stakeholders: Foster relationships with SMEs, policymakers, and innovation leaders.
- Facilitate Innovation Adoption: Support SMEs in adopting digital and green innovations.

The marketing strategy combines branding and visual identity development, digital and traditional marketing efforts, networking events, and stakeholder-driven outreach activities. Special focus is placed on integrating SustainX into European innovation networks (EDIHs, EEN nodes) to maximize its reach and impact.

A structured implementation timeline outlines the step-by-step execution of marketing activities, ensuring alignment with project milestones. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provide measurable outcomes, including website traffic, social media growth, stakeholder engagement, and participation in innovation-focused events. By embedding long-term governance mechanisms and open-access knowledge repositories, the project will continue to drive innovation, collaboration, and digital transformation in Europe.

This document provides a practical roadmap for the successful execution of SustainX's marketing and stakeholder outreach efforts, ensuring a cohesive, engaging, and impactful dissemination strategy.



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1. Introduction

SustainX is committed to implementing a coherent marketing and stakeholder outreach strategy to drive awareness, engagement, and long-term sustainability of the initiative. The SustainX Marketing & Stakeholder Outreach Plan provides a structured approach to promoting the project across regional, national, and European levels while ensuring key stakeholders, including SMEs, policymakers, researchers, and industrial players, are actively involved.

This plan integrates digital and traditional marketing approaches, leveraging online platforms, networking events, and strategic partnerships to maximize visibility and adoption of SustainX initiatives. It outlines a clear implementation timeline and key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure that the project delivers value.

By fostering engagement across multiple stakeholder groups, SustainX aims to create a collaborative and resilient innovation ecosystem, supporting sustainable digital transformation through effective communication and dissemination efforts.

2. Objectives of the Marketing and Outreach Plan

The primary objectives of this outreach plan are to establish SustainX as a leading initiative in sustainable innovation, foster engagement with SMEs, encourage policy alignment with digital transformation initiatives, and create an environment conducive to knowledge exchange and investment in sustainable technologies. Through a combination of strategic marketing, stakeholder involvement, and direct engagement efforts, this plan aims to ensure that the project reaches and influences the key actors necessary for its success. The overarching goals are to improve awareness of SustainX, facilitate meaningful collaboration among stakeholders, and drive innovation adoption through targeted marketing efforts.

In addition to enhancing awareness, the plan aims to ensure that all communications and outreach activities are measurable, with clear performance indicators to track engagement. SustainX seeks to build long-term relationships with stakeholders by providing ongoing value through knowledge-sharing, support, and networking opportunities. Another key objective is to ensure that policymakers and regulatory bodies are informed and actively involved, facilitating a policy environment that is conducive to the adoption of digital and sustainable innovations. The plan also focuses on extending the reach of SustainX beyond its initial implementation regions, expanding into new markets and engaging with European and global stakeholders.



3. Branding and Visual Identity

Branding plays a fundamental role in shaping the perception and credibility of SustainX. A strong brand communicates the project’s mission, values, and long-term objectives to stakeholders, fostering trust and recognition. The branding approach for SustainX is not only about logos and colors but also about creating a consistent and compelling narrative that resonates with target audiences. A well-structured branding strategy ensures that all marketing and outreach activities are aligned with the project’s vision, enhancing its visibility and reputation in both regional and European innovation ecosystems. Effective branding also establishes SustainX as a thought leader in sustainability and digital transformation, making it easier to attract partners, investors, and policymakers who can contribute to the project's long-term impact.

Visual identity encompasses all the tangible elements that make up the aesthetic presentation of SustainX, including the logo, typography, color schemes, graphical elements, and digital assets. The project’s visual identity is designed to be modern, clean, and representative of its commitment to sustainability and innovation. The color palette is carefully chosen to convey trust, innovation, and environmental responsibility, while typography and design elements ensure consistency across all digital and printed materials. SustainX’s visual identity extends to presentation templates, promotional materials, banners, and website design, creating a seamless and recognizable brand experience for all stakeholders. This consistency in visual representation strengthens the brand’s authority and helps maintain professional credibility in all communication efforts.

The branding strategy for SustainX encompasses a wide range of elements that collectively establish a strong and distinctive identity. This includes a well-defined mission statement, value propositions, key messaging frameworks, and visual guidelines that ensure uniformity across all communication channels. A structured approach to branding involves identifying the project’s core audiences and tailoring messaging to address their specific needs and interests. This also includes positioning SustainX as a frontrunner in sustainability by associating the brand with key themes such as digital transformation, resilience, and green innovation.

Target Group	Tailored Branding Message
Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	SustainX empowers SMEs by providing access to digital transformation tools, sustainable business practices, and funding opportunities to enhance competitiveness and growth.
Startups & Entrepreneurs	SustainX fosters an innovation-driven ecosystem where startups can scale and develop sustainable and digital solutions through collaboration, mentorship, and financial support.



Industrial Players & Large Enterprises	SustainX accelerates corporate sustainability goals and digital integration by connecting industries with cutting-edge solutions, fostering green innovation, and enabling cross-sector partnerships.
Research Organizations & Universities	SustainX promotes scientific collaboration and knowledge exchange, providing a platform where academic research translates into real-world applications that support digital and green innovation.
Polymakers & Government Agencies	SustainX aligns with EU policies on digitalization and sustainability, serving as a policy-driven initiative that supports regional economic development and fosters smart regulations for innovation.
Innovation Intermediaries (Incubators, Accelerators, Clusters)	SustainX strengthens innovation networks by connecting incubators and accelerators with industry leaders, researchers, and funding agencies to facilitate knowledge transfer and commercialization.
European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) & Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)	SustainX integrates with leading EU innovation hubs to scale impact, provide expertise to SMEs, and build resilient digital ecosystems that foster business transformation.
Civil Society & NGOs	SustainX engages communities by advocating for sustainable practices, digital inclusion, and corporate social responsibility, ensuring innovation benefits society at large.

Table 1. Branding messages tailored to target groups

In executing the branding strategy, iED developed a detailed brand guideline document outlining logo usage, typography standards, and approved color schemes to ensure that all project partners and collaborators maintain brand consistency. The project will also implement a storytelling approach in branding, using real-world impact stories, testimonials, and case studies to demonstrate the tangible benefits of SustainX initiatives. Additionally, the branding strategy will use multimedia content, including high-quality videos, animations, and infographics, to create engaging and accessible narratives that appeal to a broad audience. SustainX will also focus on digital brand management, ensuring that its presence on social media, websites, and online platforms remains strong, updated, and interactive.



4. Digital Marketing Strategy

Digital marketing plays a central role in the outreach and engagement efforts of SustainX. The strategy incorporates multiple online platforms and content-driven initiatives to reach a broad audience and maintain consistent interaction with key stakeholders. A key element of the digital marketing plan is the SustainX **website**, which serves as the main hub for project-related information, resources, updates, and engagement. This website will host a range of content, including news/ posts, reports, and multimedia materials designed to inform and inspire stakeholders about digital transformation and sustainability. The SustainX website will also include interactive features such as contact points for direct engagement with project representatives.

Social media is another cornerstone of the digital marketing strategy. SustainX will establish a strong presence on **LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube** to engage different audience segments. Each platform will serve a unique purpose: LinkedIn for professional networking and thought leadership content, Facebook for community engagement and live interactions and YouTube for video storytelling and educational content. Regular posts, infographics, video content, and behind-the-scenes glimpses into SustainX activities will keep audiences engaged and informed.

SustainX will also host and participate in a series of **virtual webinars** and interactive live-stream events, providing stakeholders with direct access to project updates, expert discussions, and networking opportunities. These digital events will focus on emerging trends, policy developments, and industry challenges related to sustainability and digital transformation, ensuring that SustainX remains at the center of key industry conversations.

Additionally, **email marketing campaigns** will be employed to maintain ongoing communication with stakeholders. SustainX will develop tailored email outreach initiatives targeting different audience segments with personalized content, including newsletters, event invitations, progress updates, and success stories. These email campaigns will focus on fostering long-term engagement, keeping stakeholders informed, and driving participation in SustainX activities.

A strong focus will also be placed on interactive and **visual storytelling**. SustainX will produce high-quality video content, including documentary-style interviews, behind-the-scenes insights, and animated explainer videos, making complex sustainability and digital innovation concepts more accessible and engaging for wider audiences. Video content will be shared across social media channels and embedded into website pages to maximize reach and impact.

Finally, SustainX will actively track and measure digital marketing efforts using advanced analytics tools. Regular performance assessments will help optimize digital strategies,



allowing the team to adjust content, refine messaging, and improve engagement based on real-time data. **Metrics** such as website traffic, social media interactions, event participation rates, and email campaign open rates will be closely monitored to ensure that the digital marketing strategy continues to deliver meaningful results.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

The stakeholder engagement strategy for SustainX is designed to create active and long-lasting relationships with key stakeholders, ensuring their participation in the project's initiatives and promoting collaboration at multiple levels. Stakeholder engagement is not only about communication but also about fostering partnerships, providing value, and building a network of committed actors who will help drive SustainX's long-term goals.

SustainX will implement a multi-tiered engagement framework that includes direct interactions, knowledge-sharing content, co-creation initiatives, and continuous feedback mechanisms. The engagement will be structured in three primary phases: Awareness, Interaction, and Long-Term Collaboration.

Awareness Phase

The first step in engagement is to make stakeholders aware of SustainX, its mission, and its benefits. This will be achieved through accessible communication channels, including a well-maintained website, social media presence, email newsletters, and digital content such as blogs and infographics. Stakeholders will receive concise, easy-to-understand information that highlights the value of engaging with SustainX.

Interaction Phase

Once stakeholders are informed, active participation will be encouraged through direct engagement efforts. These include webinars, networking events, online discussions, and interactive Q&A sessions. SMEs, policymakers, and research institutions will have opportunities to join structured conversations, provide input, and collaborate on shared objectives.

Long-Term Collaboration Phase

The final step in stakeholder engagement involves deepening relationships by integrating stakeholders into the SustainX ecosystem. This will be achieved through long-term collaboration mechanisms such as advisory boards, joint initiatives, co-branded events, and participation in working groups. SustainX will create opportunities for stakeholders to influence project decisions, share insights, and contribute to sustainability-focused innovation efforts.

Stakeholder Categories and Engagement Approaches

Engaging stakeholders effectively requires tailoring communication and participation approaches based on their unique interests and roles within the SustainX ecosystem.



Small and Medium Enterprises will be engaged through various means, including online training modules, funding opportunities, pilot programs, and networking platforms. These initiatives will provide SMEs with access to crucial resources that enable them to incorporate sustainability and digital transformation into their business operations. By fostering collaboration and offering financial incentives, SustainX aims to create a thriving SME network that contributes to the broader sustainability goals of the project.

Startups and entrepreneurs will be targeted through innovation challenges, mentorship programs, accelerator partnerships, and digital knowledge hubs. These activities will encourage the development of new solutions, helping startups scale their innovations while benefiting from SustainX's extensive network of industry leaders and investors. This engagement strategy ensures that entrepreneurial initiatives align with SustainX's objectives while fostering a spirit of collaboration and innovation.

Industrial players and large enterprises will be engaged through strategic networking events, sustainability showcases, co-development projects, and partnership forums. By providing a platform for knowledge-sharing and collaboration, SustainX will help enterprises implement sustainable practices and integrate digital transformation strategies into their business models. These engagements will also promote cross-industry partnerships, fostering innovation and improving operational efficiency in large-scale industries.

Research organizations and universities will participate in joint research publications, expert roundtables, online symposiums, and collaboration grants. These activities will facilitate knowledge-sharing, ensuring that research institutions contribute to policy development and technological advancements within SustainX's framework. Academic collaboration will help bridge the gap between research and practical implementation, leading to impactful solutions for sustainability and digital transformation.

Policymakers and government agencies will be engaged through white papers, interactive policy discussions, direct engagement through workshops. By working closely with policymakers, SustainX will ensure that its objectives align with national and European sustainability policies, creating a supportive regulatory environment for digital innovation and sustainability initiatives.

Civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be involved through public engagement campaigns, social impact initiatives, sustainability advocacy, and grassroots collaboration opportunities. These efforts will ensure that SustainX maintains a strong connection with community-driven sustainability efforts, encouraging widespread societal participation and ensuring that innovation benefits the broader public.



6. Networking and Matchmaking Events

Networking and matchmaking events will serve as a cornerstone for stakeholder engagement, fostering direct collaboration and relationship-building among key players in the sustainability and digital innovation ecosystems. These events will be structured to facilitate meaningful interactions between SMEs, policymakers, investors, researchers, and industry leaders.

SustainX will organize thematic networking events tailored to specific industry needs, including sustainability workshops, innovation showcases, and industry-led roundtables. These sessions will allow participants to exchange ideas, explore partnership opportunities, and co-develop solutions that align with SustainX's mission.

Matchmaking events will be strategically designed to connect startups and SMEs with investors, funding agencies, and larger corporations seeking innovative solutions. These events will incorporate pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings, ensuring that participants engage in targeted discussions that lead to actionable outcomes. SustainX will also use digital matchmaking platforms to complement in-person events, providing stakeholders with virtual networking opportunities that extend beyond geographical constraints.

To ensure the effectiveness of these networking and matchmaking activities, SustainX will implement a follow-up strategy that includes post-event surveys, collaboration tracking, and stakeholder engagement reports. By continuously refining these events based on participant feedback and engagement metrics, SustainX will maximize the long-term value of its networking efforts and strengthen relationships within its ecosystem.



7. Implementation Timeline

The implementation of the marketing and outreach strategy will follow a structured approach, ensuring that each phase is executed effectively and contributes to the overall success of SustainX. The timeline includes activities that are integral to building visibility, engaging stakeholders, and measuring progress.

Month	Activity
Month 1-3	Develop branding materials, launch website, establish social media presence, conduct stakeholder mapping, and define key messaging.
Month 4-6	Implement first phase of content marketing, start email campaigns, begin regional outreach, and organize the first stakeholder engagement sessions.
Month 7-9	Launch first webinar series, start targeted press releases
Month 10-12	Conduct regional awareness campaigns, expand outreach to SMEs and EDIHs, and refine engagement strategies based on stakeholder feedback.
Month 13-16	Launch second wave of social media campaigns, publish updates on interregional collaborations, and assess ongoing engagement activities.
Month 17-21	Conduct final outreach refinements, organize matchmaking event, and ensure alignment with European strategic innovation goals.
Month 22-24	Complete final impact assessments, publish end-of-project stakeholder report, and final event.

Table 2. Implementation Timeline

8. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To ensure the effectiveness of SustainX's outreach and marketing efforts, clear and measurable KPIs will be used. These indicators will help track progress and allow adjustments to be made as needed.

KPI	Target Value
Website visitors	> 2000 (2025), > 5000 (2026)
Social media engagement	Facebook > 300 (2025), > 600 (2026) LinkedIn > 300 (2025), > 600 (2026)
Press releases	Minimum 2 per year
Newsletter subscribers	> 400 by end of 2026, at least 3 newsletters per year
Number of EDIHs engaged and notified about the project	≥ 40
Number of EEN nodes actively engaged and participating in activities	≥ 7



Number of investment pitches supported	≥ 1
Number of LoIs signed	≥ 2
Number of eco-innovations developed	≥ 1
Number of innovation training series (virtual)	≥ 5
Number of interregional alliances established or in preparation	≥ 5
Number of SMEs reached	≥ 50
Attendee satisfaction rating for events	80%+ positive feedback

Table 3. KPIs



SustainX



<https://sustainx.digital-innovation.zone/>

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Funded by
the European Union

This project received funding from the European
Union through grant agreement no. 101180410.