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Type: Talk

Their voices are powerful –Multi-voice, multimedia stories for raising scientific awareness

Thursday 19 March 2026 11:00 (20 minutes)

Our scientific communities are not just our audiences –it's their voices we serve to amplify. Researchers, patients, biobankers and citizens write their stories and are the best suited persons to tell them. As the communications team of BBMRI-ERIC, Europe's largest and widely distributed research infrastructure (RI), we want to support our community in sharing these stories.

In this talk, we will guide you through our process of developing immersive, community-driven multimedia stories aligned with international awareness days.

We will share our strategies for:

1. the initial stage of newsgathering
2. generating multimedia content together with our communities
3. bringing the stories to life on screen via “scrollytelling” (1) - an immersive visual storytelling approach developed in journalism

One of our most effective strategies is to align our outreach with internationally recognised awareness days (e.g. World Patient Safety Day or International Childhood Cancer Day). By building on the momentum of global initiatives that match our core activities as an RI, we can highlight special topics like paediatric cancer research or women's health. This gives more visibility to traditionally underrepresented groups and in turn we know this strengthens an equitable relationship with our core community.

Our newsgathering process starts by sending callouts for stories related to an upcoming awareness day. And our communities respond with enthusiasm. They know their case studies have profound relevance and immediate connection to citizens. But often their original voices are not conveyed in scientific publications.

Together with the persons involved, we choose and produce a suitable format for their contribution: Audio or video recordings (short interviews or whole podcast episodes), infographics and more. We then arrange this multimedia mosaic into a coherent story. Instead of confronting the audience with a rigid block of text or video, scrollytelling immerses readers in a dynamic mix of media that gradually unfolds as they scroll through the story. You can navigate through the content in your own time and create your own experience.

With limited resources for in-house media productions, we developed workflows for fast and simple generation of audio and video content. With today's recording quality of standard smartphones and webcams, multimedia content can be produced straightforwardly with manageable investment of time and resources. As we also use an external platform (Shorthand) to assemble our stories, we do not have to implement state-of-the-art media functionalities into our own organisation's website.

The techniques and media we use can vary but our priority remains: Shining spotlights on those who do the work and are at the centre of our progress as an RI and as a society. Their voices are powerful –and they need to be heard.

Workshops only: Duration

Workshops only: participants

Workshops only: Equipment

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