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Communicating complexity: communications and outreach in a shifting landscape

Thursday 19 March 2026 15:45 (20 minutes)

In an era where it is possible for misinformation to spread faster than peer-reviewed evidence, public trust in science is increasingly fragile, effective science communication has become both more critical and challenging than ever before. This talk explores how science communicators and researchers can navigate a fractured information landscape where scientific messages compete with contradicting narratives, political agendas and widespread scepticism and misinformation.

This talk will discuss the how the rapid advancement of technologies like AI has intensified many of the challenges communicators face around misinformation and mistrust in research. Though AI promises transformative societal benefits such as helping build clean energy resources, public discourse is often dominated by sensationalism, misunderstanding and politically motivated discourse. When research becomes politicised and science itself is positioned as partisan, communicators must ask difficult questions: who are we actually reaching, and who have we stopped reaching?

This talk will cover the value of high-quality communications activities within the supercomputing research community, examining how science communicators can build dialogue across divides. How to troubleshoot the challenges we face when public trust is eroded, and technical messages must cut through noise, bias and deliberate misinformation. I will also share practical tools and techniques to navigate communication challenges, stand out in saturated digital environments and demonstrate the value of strategic stakeholder engagement to cultivate ongoing support and investment.

Key themes:

Countering misinformation: Practical approaches to address false narratives

Public engagement: Techniques for making complex research accessible and relevant to a wider audience and policymakers

Communicating research: Strategies for engaging industry and public stakeholders, demonstrating its societal and economic impact

Building communities: Best practices for fostering collaboration and creating spaces where you can share resources, insights and solutions

Practical insights participants will gain:

Designing communication strategies to communicate research outcomes effectively.

Developing impactful messaging to stand out in a saturated digital environment where you need to combat misinformation

Developing approaches to build trust in audiences

Maximising the role of researchers as advocates and brand ambassadors

Workshops only: Duration

Workshops only: participants

Workshops only: Equipment

Presenter: ALEXANDROVA, Stella Elena (STFC Hartree Centre)

Session Classification: Parallel session

Track Classification: Science Communication in the Age of Misinformation and Polarisation