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ROMANDIC

Robot Manipulation of Deformables through
Dynamic Actions

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Contents

Executive summary	3
1 Dissemination plan	4
1.1 Goals at the International level across Europe	4
1.2 Goals at the National level in Slovenia	4
2 Dissemination plan	5
2.1 Why to disseminate?	5
2.2 What to disseminate?	5
2.3 ROMANDIC means of dissemination and communication.	6
2.4 To whom and why to disseminate?	10
2.5 When to disseminate?	11
2.6 Quantitative targets	12
3 Exploitation plan	13

Executive summary

This deliverable describes the initial plan for dissemination and exploitation, including communication activities for the ROMANDIC project.

The plan builds upon the initial plan described in the proposal. Accordingly, the dissemination strategy encompasses both national efforts focused on the coordinator country Slovenia, as well as international outreach.

Why to disseminate, what to disseminate, means of dissemination, targets of dissemination, timing of dissemination and quantitative targets are given.

An exploitation plan is outlined.

It is important to emphasize that the dissemination and communication activities outlined in WP5 will be closely integrated with the community development, network building, and road-mapping initiatives detailed in WP1.

1 Dissemination plan

The dissemination strategy focuses on effectively transferring knowledge and results to the most appropriate stakeholders who can optimize their utilization. While all consortium partners will engage in international dissemination activities, JSI will additionally undertake targeted dissemination within Slovenia. This approach is strategically designed to maximize the action's impact and ensure its long-term sustainability in accordance with JSI's specific requirements. The combined reach of all partners' extensive European networks, complemented by JSI's established national contacts, will be leveraged to significantly expand the dissemination scope and effectiveness.

1.1 Goals at the International level across Europe

The main objectives to achieve are to:

- Conduct open, excellent research to enhance scientific excellence across Europe
- Reinforce partners' research capacities and at Jožef Stefan Institute to promote it as a reference for the Network of Excellence specialised in robot handling of deformables at the European level.
- Create a sustainable cooperation framework that creates synergies with key external, relevant stakeholders in the field, boosts new collaborations & opportunities for new EU-funded projects and contribute in other projects beyond partners. Partners are expected to proactively engage with relevant stakeholders.
- Elevate the visibility and influence of JSI and partner institutions within the Excellence Science Ecosystem all across Europe.

Ultimately, all dissemination activities aim to attract expert participation from outside the consortium institutions, thereby expanding the Network of Excellence and amplifying its impact. These Dissemination and communication activities will be aligned and integrated with the community and network building and roadmapping activities outlined in WP1.

1.2 Goals at the National level in Slovenia

At a national level, JSI will create strategic synergies and stimulate economic development and growth. JSI will target its dissemination activities specifically towards Slovenian industry and policy makers. The main objectives to achieve in Slovenia are to:

- Attract expertise and talent to JSI and Slovenian research ecosystem, positioning the country to address ambitious technological challenges.
- Foster Slovenian industry investment in R&D&I through strategic awareness-building among key stakeholders and implementation of international cooperation programs.

- Secure the engagement of policy makers and government officials in the long-term sustainability and governance of the Network of Excellence
- Enhance scientific opportunities in Slovenia, promoting good practices within the Academia.
- Enhance JSI's visibility and reputation as a provider of high-quality employment, scientific and industrial leadership, and enhanced career pathways for emerging researchers
- Facilitate effective knowledge transfer of newly acquired capabilities from JSI to Slovenian industrial partners to maximize commercial applications and economic benefits.

2 Dissemination plan

The plan was designed to answer the following considerations:

- Why to disseminate?
- What to disseminate?
- ROMANDIC means of dissemination and communication.
- To whom and why to disseminate?
- When to disseminate?

2.1 Why to disseminate?

Widespread project visibility and active stakeholder engagement are paramount to maximise our impact, ensuring that: (i) stakeholders are aware of our activities and their value propositions; (ii) results can be fully exploited across academia and industry; (iii) valuable insights, lessons learned and meaningful (gender-disaggregated when possible) data collected/generated, are accessible to interested stakeholders; (iv) ROMANDIC's elements of excellence serve as replicable models for future initiatives; (v) the project effectively reaches policy-making bodies, thereby contributing towards promoting the industrial leadership of the EU in robotic manipulation of deformable objects.

2.2 What to disseminate?

The project-related knowledge and information to be disseminated include: (i) the project's vision, objectives, strategic relevance and key facts; (ii) ongoing news, significant achievements, and research outcomes ; (iii) project-organized events in which partners will participate and present their findings; and (iv) high-impact project results and valuable intellectual assets developed throughout the project lifecycle.

2.3 ROMANDIC means of dissemination and communication.

As ROMANDIC constitutes a coordination and support action type of project, it offers a distinct set of activities compared to research-and-innovation or innovation-action projects. The project incorporates Project Events and Workshops (PEW) as primary vehicles for dissemination. All dissemination activities outlined below have been strategically planned and appropriately budgeted within the project framework.

2.3.1 Project events and workshops (*PEW)

Project workshops

- With the institutions' common services and project offices: 2 are planned - one organized by CSIC (M9 of ROMANDIC) and one by JSI (around M20 of ROMANDIC).

The preparation of workshop by CSIC in Barcelona is already under way. Below is the text we used for inviting the attendees:

1st ROMANDIC Workshop – Project Management and European Funding Strategies as part of the Horizon Europe ROMANDIC project, we are organizing a training workshop-focused on enhancing project management and coordination within European project offices. The event will bring together representatives from Jožef Stefan Institute (JSI), Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) and other experts to exchange best practices and strengthen collaboration in securing and managing EU-funded projects. The workshop will feature presentations from each institution, discussions on funding opportunities and proposal strategies, and dedicated sessions on key topics such as Gender Equality Policies and Open Access in research. Additionally, there will be opportunities for networking and collaboration. Dates: June 12-13, 2025

- Project workshop with policy makers: One is planned, to be organized by JSI around M30.
- Project workshops with the industry - strategic foresight workshops. One will be organized by JSI in M12. One will be organized by KIT around M24.

Summer schools

Two summer/winter schools are planned throughout the project duration. The first one will be organized by JSI, around M15 of ROMANDIC. This event will take place during winter months, hence it will be a winter school. The second summer school will be organized by CSIC towards the end of the project.

Senior researcher seminar

One senior researcher seminar will be organized by KIT around M14.

Secondments

A total of 16 secondments are planned between project partners. While these primarily serve research collaboration purposes, they will be enhanced with complementary dissemination activities including public lectures by visiting researchers, laboratory tours for local stakeholders, and technical demonstrations showcasing the project's achievements. These events will strategically leverage the presence of visiting experts to maximize knowledge transfer and visibility within host institutions and their broader ecosystems.

Final conference

The final conference will be merged with one of the PEW towards the end of ROMANDIC.

2.3.2 Events (*E)

Partners retain access and will attend major industrial exhibitions and trade fairs with AI and Robotics applications to e.g., European Robotics Forum (ERF), Automatica, and exhibitions at international conferences such as ICRA, IROS and Humanoids etc. to disseminate project outcomes.

The project was already presented by JSI at the Ljubljana International Trade Fair for Automation and Electronics IFAM, February 11-13, 2025. The presentation is depicted in Figure 1. The project was also presented at the JSI Open Day on March 29th ,2025. The presentation is depicted in Figure 2.



Figure 1: Presentation of ROMANDIC poster and work on handling of textiles within the project at the IFAM 2025 fair in Ljubljana, February 12th, 2025.



Figure 2: Presentation of ROMANDIC poster and work on handling of textiles within the project at the JSI Open Day, March 29th, 2025.

2.3.3 Scientific Publications (*SP)

Research outputs will lead to high-quality publications disseminated through prestigious journals and conferences in the field. ROMANDIC's researchers regularly receive invitations to present at top-tier scientific conferences and specialized workshops. Participation in high-impact conferences and exhibitions represents one of our primary dissemination channels. We have identified several key external events for targeted dissemination activities, including:

- The European Robotics Forum,
- Hannover Messe,
- The International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA),
- IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS),
- The International Conference on Industry 4.0 and Smart Manufacturing (ISM), and
- Industry 4.0 Summit.

It should be noted that ROMANDIC partners have already contributed to a Workshop proposal for IROS 2025. This proposal has been submitted and is currently under evaluation. Our publication strategy aims to produce papers for international conferences as well as articles in high-impact international journals relevant to our research domains. Target journals include:

- IEEE Transactions on Robotics,

- IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters,
- International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology,
- Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research, and
- Robotics and Computer Integrated Manufacturing

Specific quantitative targets for our dissemination activities are outlined in the following section.

2.3.4 Website and Social Media (*WSM)

The project website has been established and undergoes regular updates to feature news, ongoing research developments, and project outcomes. The site is designed to present information in a clear, accessible format and includes an online repository of resources. We leverage social networks to establish two-way communication with our audience and gather valuable feedback. Quarterly newsletters and consistently refreshed content help transform occasional visitors into engaged stakeholders. Our social media strategy includes carefully tailored messaging across various platforms, with content specifically adapted to the interests and needs of different target audiences to maximize engagement and impact. The webpage, available at <http://www.project-romandic.eu/>, was presented in Deliverable D5.1

LinkedIn (already established) and potentially either X or Bluesky (currently under evaluation) social media accounts will be utilized as primary digital communication channels for the project.

2.3.5 Printed Material (*PM)

High-quality promotional materials including brochures, leaflets, posters, and presentation templates containing key information about the project and Network of Excellence services have been designed for distribution among potential stakeholders, collaborators, and customers. A professional pull-up banner has already been produced and deployed at initial dissemination events.

2.3.6 Protocols and Policy Recommendation guides (*PPR)

To effectively increase institutional interest in R&D&I and inform strategic development, ROMANDIC will thoroughly document the societal and economic benefits generated through its activities. Additionally, we will develop comprehensive policy recommendations based on insights gathered during the Strategic Foresight Regulator and Policy Workshop, providing actionable guidance for future initiatives in robot manipulation of deformable objects.

2.3.7 Consortium Network, Network of Excellence (*CN)

It is essential to establish permanent communication channels with key industrial associations relevant to the project at both national and European levels. We will strategically leverage the consortium's extensive network of influence, particularly through the Network of Excellence, to

engage with industrial associations and SME clusters, thereby maximizing our communication reach and impact. Each partner's industrial advisory board, affiliated clusters, and organizational connections will be systematically integrated into our stakeholder community to ensure comprehensive industry engagement and knowledge transfer.

2.4 To whom and why to disseminate?

2.4.1 Target group Jožef Stefan Institute & Consortium

Objectives: Reinforce JSI & partners research capacities / Impact on researcher's career development / Establish a relationship between consortium members / Grant the sustainability of the Innovation Hub / launch PhD courses

Tools: *PEW / Internal Meetings & online conferences / Repository / Guides & training documents / Secondments Strategy / Technical divulgation / Relationship database

2.4.2 Target group Academic & Scientific Community

Objectives: Increase EU knowledge / Fostering knowledge sharing / Attract talent to the network / Strengthen researchers' skills / Promote knowledge transfer & Open Science Approach / Opportunities for new projects / Gender equality plans / Exchange Lessons Learned / Contribute for new EU projects / Attract European Investment / Disseminate information about the project's results / Promote Open Science Approach / Boost Science Education

Tools: *PEW / *WSN / *PM / *E / *SP / Open meetings & round tables / *PPR / Technical divulgation / Open specific research trainings

2.4.3 Target group Industry & SMEs:

Objectives:

- *International:* Create a network to act as a NOE / Get the maximum stakeholder's involvement / Establish synergies, boosting new collaborations & projects / New research services
- *Slovenia:* Awareness of the research / Impact on Slovene development / Create new job opportunities / Involve Slovene industry and raise awareness of projects possibilities for national and European innovations

Tools: Events, presentations & demonstrations in scientific Congress / Workshops / Trade fairs / Brokerage events & networking / *WSM / *PM / Mailing / Mass Media / Job banks

2.4.4 Target group Authorities & Policy Makers:

Objectives: Disseminate the benefits of knowledge transfer / Raise awareness on issues and the importance of research in the topic / Establish synergies and boost new collaborations / Attract European Investment / promote a communication route which allows for establishing feedback with the project, including updated information about findings and unforeseen risks detected

Tools: Societal & economic benefits of the project brochure / Mass Media and letters of intent / Invitation to events

2.4.5 Target group Specialized Media

Objectives: Offer specific science contents / Share the importance of knowledge transfer / Advertise about the project

Tools: *WSM / Guides & training documents

2.5 When to disseminate?

To ensure suitable timing of dissemination activities we identify four stages during the project and beyond. Figure 3 depicts the stages of dissemination.

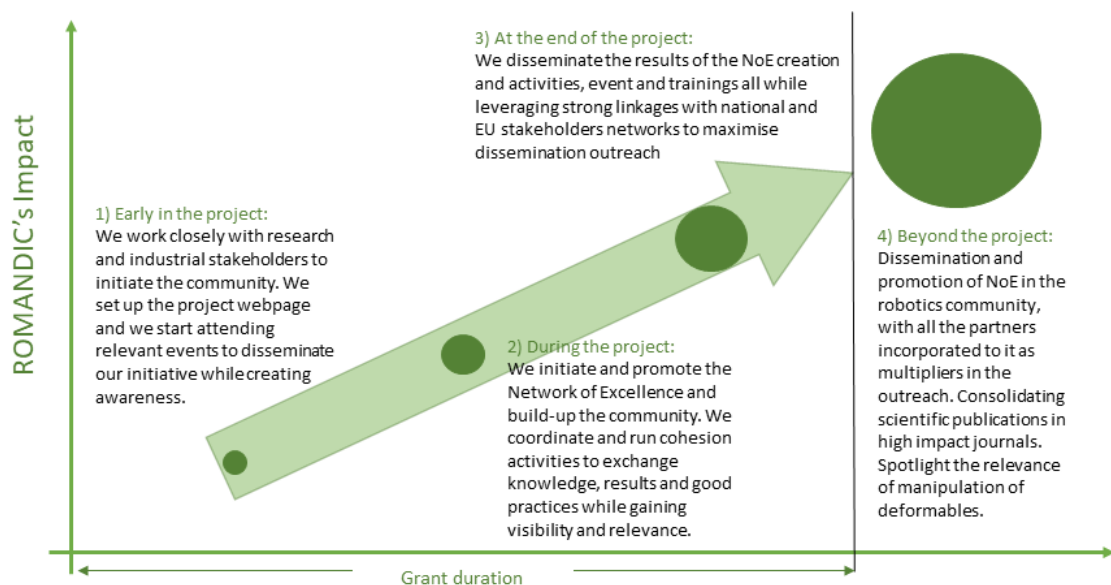


Figure 3: Stages of ROMANDIC dissemination

From the start of the project, we raise the awareness of the project and its activities, followed by its targeted promotion and dissemination of the results. The developed Network of Excellence then takes a life of its own after the project.

2.6 Quantitative targets

Key impact indicators for dissemination and communication activities are given in Table 1

Indicator	Target	Completed
Synergies with initiatives & networks	15 joint actions	2
Journal publications	12	
External events and conferences attended	20 events	2
Number of Newsletters released	6	
Followers on social media	500+	50
Final Conference participants ¹	up to 100	
Views of promotional videos	500	50
Promotional material distributed	500+	0
Unique visits to the website	10,000+	179
Stakeholders reached/engaged	10,000/500	500+/50 ²

Table 1: ROMANDIC dissemination KPIs and current status

¹ Format of the conference is not yet determined

² at fair and open day; estimate

Project events and workshops Besides the above listed dissemination KPIs, the project includes the activities given in Table 2, which will greatly elevate the level of dissemination and promotion.

Events	Nr.	Organizing partner
Workshops	5	3× JSI, 1× CSIC, 1× KIT
Summer School	2	1× JSI, 1× CSIC
Senior Researcher Seminar	1	1× KIT
Secondments	16	8× JSI, 4× KIT, 4× CSIC
Meetings	10	4× JSI, 5× CSIC, 1× KIT

Table 2: Overview of ROMANDIC project events and activities

3 Exploitation plan

ROMANDIC constitutes a great opportunity not only to position and enhance JSI but also to catalyze innovation in the field of robot handling of deformable materials, in a clear coordination with the industry. The exploitation plan has been defined according to the following premises: The research topic of robot handling of deformable materials will be enhanced through the creation of a network of stakeholders, which will act as a NOE, offering complementary services to boost industrial development in different sectors. Three workshops (focusing on industrial perspective and policy foresight, two additional on the development of project offices) are planned to further extend the knowledge transfer to other sectors and disciplines.

Research on the topic and results of research will be used as the lowest common denominator driving the initiative. This strategy considers all the achieved and expected results and identifies potential beneficiaries. Involving all the partners, the aim is to find a common agreement on how the project's results will be owned and used. General recommendations will be proposed on both joint and individual exploitation strategies in terms of IPR strategy, technology road-maps and commercial opportunities for each partner. A business plan template will be created to exploit potential results stemming from NOE initiatives. The project has a clearly-defined long terms impact: to create a self-sustainable network/community on the topic, which will act as a CoE or NoE, to enhance industrial and policy makers' awareness in robot (dynamic) handling of deformable materials from both scientific and industrial applications across different industrial sectors. This shapes the exploitation and dissemination strategy needs during the project as well as during its continuation on the long-lasting activities.

On the other hand, the project is also focused on the development and training of JSI personnel, both research and administrative, on different topics and disciplines to reinforce their knowledge on the scientific topic as well as the topic of managing projects and applying to open calls. The researchers participating in the secondments and workshops will acquire cutting-edge knowledge in the field, trained by the most relevant experts in the EU. Hence, the project aims to create a task force to boost the capability and knowledge obtained during the project. The last outcome of the project would be to create an expert group that could group the expertise and know-how of the consortium and work hand in hand with industry and policy maker representatives to create a useful tool for relevant stakeholders. The developed NoE will offer new, industry-oriented, research services open to industry and institutions, covering all the needs, and collecting the activities together.

The created network will act as a CoE, and will address the industrial demands and suggest new fields of interest. Through the White-paper and road-mapping activities, it will identify the most critical research, industrial needs, and market trends, which will provide a sustainable and well-established continuity.

Access market strategy will be developed to identify industry and stakeholders needs, as well as to create new services to give response to upcoming needs. The project will capture the interest of SMEs and specialist industries in all the EU countries involved and will try to get the maximum of partners' and stakeholders' networks to involve institutions at multinational and European level, increasing their interest in R&D&I, and prioritizing future research needs, particularly in Slovenia. This includes open specific research training activities, enhancing the researcher's capacities, their career development and creating new job opportunities.

The project foresees implementing 2 new courses for PhD students. Collaboration agreements between research centres will be explored, focused on promoting joint courses. A great impact on job creation linked to the project is also expected.

Open science resources will be used to share generated data in the research outcomes. Exploitation measures in ROMANDIC can be summarized as follows:

- Further research & Technology transfer activities
- Skills and educational training
- Commercial and industrial valorisation in SMEs
- Research and industrial Road-map
- Business plan template for NoE results and outcomes
- Strategy and recommendations addressed to policy makers