



Deliverable D9.1: Dissemination Plan

**SI-CODE: Towards new Brain-Machine Interfaces:
State-dependent information coding**

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Introduction

One of the most relevant aspects of the SI-CODE project is the strong interdisciplinary nature that will permit to explore its scientific questions at different levels of complexity. For this reason pursuing a strong dissemination strategy is crucial to obtain the expected results.

On March 29-30, 2012 the SI-CODE kick-off meeting took place in Genoa at the Italian Institute of Technology. Researchers representing the whole consortium took part in the meeting and a dissemination strategy was designed.

We all agreed on the fact that the success of the project depends in part on the capability of the partners to share and disseminate information both within the consortium and towards the scientific community at large. With this intent, we defined our dissemination strategy on three different levels:

- Consortium;
- Other EU and non-EU funded projects;
- Scientific community and general public at large.

At consortium level, the dissemination and the sharing of results will be guaranteed through face-to-face meetings, videoconferences and through the use of the website, specifically the restricted area. General consortium meetings will help each partner to update the whole consortium about the results obtained, to raise new questions and to try to find a solution at the encountered problems. These meetings will have also the goal of defining the strategies to make this project successful. Whenever possible, the general meetings will take place in conjunction with the project's review meetings.

To facilitate the dissemination at the level of other EU and non-EU funded projects, the consortium will try to schedule at least one of the annual meetings in conjunction with international meetings or workshops such as the "Capocaccia Cognitive Neuromorphic Engineering Workshop " (www.capocaccia.ethz.ch/capo/wiki/2012) " that already provides a forum for international recently funded EU and non-EU projects.

The dissemination towards both the scientific community and the general public will be supported by a strong publication strategy based on the interdisciplinary nature of the project. This aspect will make our results interesting for a broad audience of researchers coming from different scientific fields (i.e. neuroscience, medical, physiology, robotics, engineering ,computational neuroscience). Also the general public will be interested in our project due to the impact that an improved knowledge of the brain functionalities may have on restoring motor and sensory functions to people who lost them.

Dissemination Plan

During the kick-off meeting, the consortium defined the dissemination channels which will be part of the dissemination strategy of the project. Those are:

- Press releases and news coverage describing the advancement and main results of the project;
- Management of a publicly available website and other web 2.0 tools;
- Publications of papers in proceedings of conferences and events as well as scientific publications in specialized international journals ;
- Organization of conferences and hops on project-related topics as well as talks at relevant international conferences, events and forums.

In the following sections additional information on each single dissemination channel will be provided.



Press releases and news coverage

The consortium recognizes the importance of guaranteeing a press and media coverage of the results. In order to do so, the consortium will work closely with the Press Offices of the involved institutions to release press reports and obtain media coverage. These efforts will be led by the Press Office of the coordinating institution (IIT) who will interact with the press offices of the other institutions. Press releases will be timed around important events, such as kick-off and review meetings, publication of major results in leading international journals (the latter will be coordinated with the Press Office of the publisher and will respect their embargo policies) and keynote or plenary presentations at important meetings. When media coverage is obtained in online news, the SI-CODE website will feed the news through their social network channels (its Facebook and Tweet accounts).

These activities began with the preparation of the kick-off meeting held in Genova on March 29-30 2012, when a press release (jointly prepared by the IIT and SISSA press offices, which was also made available to the MPI and UZH press offices) was written and reported by several (at least 5 to our knowledge) national (Italian) newspapers and news websites. A list of the online published articles about SI-CODE launch can be found in the “News” section of the project website (<http://www.sicode.eu/news-and-events/news/item/news-link-from-the-sicode-launch.html>).

Project website and web 2.0 tools

In order to reach out to a wider public, the consortium has decided to set up a dedicated website and to use web 2.0 tools to disseminate the project’s results. The project web site has already been implemented (www.sicode.eu) and most of the content has been inserted. The main goal is to build a “virtual space” with the double aim of giving a general overview of the project and also of being an easy tool for sharing documents, data and news within the consortium. The website has been developed along six main sections:

- *Objectives*: overview of project objectives and achievements;
- *Results*: a description of the main results which will be regularly updated by the partners. The Results contain both the list of the publications produced by the project and the public Deliverables of the project, which include both reports and the link to the open source code of the algorithms.
- *Members*: essential information on the project participants with contact information of the project leaders with possibility of sending messages and visiting their personal web pages;
- *News and events*: constantly updated with news on project related activities such as conferences, workshops, meetings, demos, etc.;
- *Contacts*: essential contact information on the coordinating institution;
- *Links*: a number of relevant links to other projects, institutions, etc. which are related to SI-CODE.

Through the home page it is also possible to login to a restricted area accessible only to the project members where data and private documents can be easily shared. The restricted area will be used to facilitate secure exchange of knowledge within the consortium, and will include both proposals of ongoing research (for exchange of feedback among participants) and unpublished literature reviews aimed at helping the progress of young scientists within the consortium.

The website will be kept updated with the cooperation of all the participating institutions. New pages and sections will be added should this be felt necessary by the consortium.



The website also contains links to web 2.0 tools, such as Twitter and Facebook. The SI-CODE project has indeed opened dedicated Facebook and Twitter account to share and follow news and information relevant for the project in an easy and fast way.

A project image has been also designed and it strongly reflects the whole website appearance.

Scientific publications

Among all the planned dissemination activities, printed publications are meant both for the general scientific community and for the several specialized communities (such as neuroscience, Computational Biology, Neural Engineering, Dynamical Systems Physics) for which the research of the Consortium is relevant.

Scientific publications remain a key priority for the consortium. During the kick-off meeting, the consortium has identified the following journals as target for future publications:

- Journals that report major discoveries of wide interest to biological sciences: *Science, Nature, Current Biology, PNAS, PLoS Biology, PLoS Computational Biology.*
- Journals that report original discoveries in both empirical and mathematical Neuroscience: *Neuron, Nature Neuroscience, Journal of Neuroscience, Cerebral Cortex, Journal of Neurophysiology, Frontiers in Computational Neuroscience, Frontiers in Neuroinformatics, Neural Computation, Journal of Computational Neuroscience, Journal of Neuroscience Methods, PLoS Computational Biology.*
- Journals that report discoveries in Neural Engineering or Physics, such as *Physical Review E, Frontiers in Neuromorphic Engineering, Frontiers in Neural Engineering, Journal of Neural Engineering*
- Review journals: *Nature Reviews Neuroscience, Trends in Neurosciences, Frontiers in Neuroscience.*

Although publication in high profile of original research articles reporting the original discoveries planned in the proposal remains the highest priority of the Consortium, the Consortium recognizes the usefulness of general review paper to engage as much as possible both specialist and general research communities. Part of this need will be covered by publication of review articles in the some of the journal lists above by individual members of the consortium. To further strengthen this aspect, the consortium has however planned two extra steps. The first is to try to prepare, possibly within the first year of the Project, a joint “Perspective” or “Commentary” article for one of the journals listed above, and authored by as many principal investigators of the Consortium as possible, about the scientific challenges that we wish to address in the proposal. The second step is to target the occasional publication of Chapters about the topics relevant to the aims of Si-CODE in Books aimed at the training of the current and next generation of graduate students. The latter step is important in ensuring a mid and long term impact of our research.

Even if the project is still in the initial phase, the Consortium is pleased to note that the publication activity has already begun. A series of papers is already in preparation or under review thanks to the collaboration between the members of the consortium. The following lists some papers in preparation:

A. Vato, M. Semprini, E. Maggiolini, F. D. Szymanski, L. Fadiga, S. Panzeri and F.A. Mussa-Ivaldi (2012) Shaping the dynamics of a bidirectional neural interface. Plos Comput. Biol.

A. Mazzoni, N.K. Logothetis, S. Panzeri (2012) The information content of Local Field Potentials: experiments and models. In (Quiñero Quiroga and Panzeri, Eds), Principles of Neural Coding, CRC press, Boca Raton, FL.



R. Quian Quiroga and S. Panzeri (2012) Decoding and information theory in neuroscience. In (Quian Quiroga and Panzeri, Eds), Principles of Neural Coding, CRC press, Boca Raton, FL.

G. Indiveri (2012) Coding in neuromorphic VLSI networks. In (Quian Quiroga and Panzeri, Eds), Principles of Neural Coding, CRC press, Boca Raton, FL.

N. Brunel (2012) Dynamics of neural networks. In (Quian Quiroga and Panzeri, Eds), Principles of Neural Coding, CRC press, Boca Raton, FL.

Dissemination events:

The organization of scientific events and the participation in targeted conferences or workshops is an important part of the dissemination strategy to promote collaboration with other scientists and to share the obtained results exploring the possibility of future research cooperation. Following is a list of targeted events:

i. Kick-off meeting

The kick-off meeting was the first organized event, lasted two days and was held in Genoa at the headquarters of the Italian Institute of Technology on March 29-30, 2012. The consortium organized Immediately before the official start of the kick-off (which was open only to the consortium members), the consortium organized an open presentation of the project, which was advertised within the IIT network.

ii. Planned conferences and workshops

The attendance to international conferences and workshop is considered by the consortium a crucial aspect of the dissemination strategy of the SI-CODE project. Even if the project just started, some of the members of the consortium already attended or have submitted contributions for presentation at the following conferences:

- *NCM 2012 "Society for the Neural control of Movement" 23-29 April 2012 (www.ncm-society.org)*
- *Areadne 2012 "Research in Encoding And Decoding of Neural Ensembles" 21-24 June 2012 (www.areadne.org)*
- *CNS 2012 "Computational Neuroscience Meeting" 21-26 July 2012 (www.cnsorg.org)*
- *Neuroscience 2012 "Society for Neuroscience" 13-17 October 2012 (www.sfn.org)*
- *NIPS 2012 "Neural Information Processing System Foundation" 3-8 December 2012 (www.nips.cc/Conferences/2012)*
- *Neural Coding Workshop, Prague, September 2012*

It has been agreed by the consortium to aim at organizing special sessions and/or small workshops in conjunction with major events in order to guarantee the dissemination of the project's results to a wide audience. The list of conferences presented in this section is a non exclusive one and it just includes the conferences which took place or are going to take place in 2012. This list will be continuously updated and adapted to the consortium needs. In order to facilitate communication within the Consortium, the SI-CODE web site will report each year a list of conferences suggested to its members, and the News section and its social network feeds will report plans of individual members to attend conferences. This will facilitate dissemination of our research over a good number of key conferences, as well as facilitate meeting and scientific exchange opportunities among members of the Consortium attending the same conferences. To facilitate exchange of results within the Consortium, members presenting at

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conferences will be asked to upload their presentation on the restricted access area of the project web site.