

Outreach & Communication Plan



OPTiMA
ARC TRAINING CENTRE IN OPTIMISATION TECHNOLOGIES
INTEGRATED METHODOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS

OPTiMA is committed to developing an outreach program, led by Centre members, to engage with the following key outreach target groups:

- the general public (school students, teachers, parents)
- the broader academic community (interdisciplinary applications of optimisation)
- business, government, industry, and not-for-profits (from current and prospective sectors)
- OPTiMA's key stakeholders (such as the ARC, university and industry partners).

The aim of the outreach plan is to ensure OPTiMA is:

1. communicating effectively in a manner that broadens knowledge of optimisation and the potential of optimisation technologies to the above target outreach groups;
2. promoting the achievements of OPTiMA, its people, and its research outcomes;
3. engaging with the above key target groups, rather than relying on passive forms of communication alone.

The purpose of the OPTiMA Outreach Sub-Committee is to identify opportunities for members of OPTiMA to contribute to outreach through community, education and industry-related activities, events, communications, and media. The Outreach Sub-Committee designs, promotes, delivers and evaluates an annual series of outreach activities. The diversity of this Sub-Committee - including diversity of demography, research field, application domains, and location - is intended to ensure that it is well placed to consider a wealth of ideas to engage successfully with the diverse target groups, but additional expertise will be harnessed as necessary in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

OPTiMA's outreach goals will be achieved with two strategies and corresponding action plans:

1. communications strategy: to promote achievements and raise awareness and understanding of the potential of optimisation (passively providing information, resources and media for any audience, with some active dissemination to specific target groups where appropriate)
2. outreach activity strategy: to engage with specific target groups in a more active manner, through the design of focused activities

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN

- Regularly refresh OPTIMA website/blog/newsfeed with dynamic and informative content
- Regularly post using social media (Twitter, FaceBook, LinkedIn, etc.) about OPTIMA's research and people, news and events
- Develop a series of online videos explaining key concepts in optimisation, pitched at the general public (high school students, teachers, parents) to secure a pipeline of future students (in partnership with the Education and Training Sub-Committee)
- Develop written and media content (short video showreels) for OPTIMA successful case studies, available on OPTIMA website, and for social media posts (focused on industry outcomes as well as student training opportunities and graduate outcomes)
- Publication of research achievements in scholarly journals
- Publication of impact achievements in industry outlets such as newsletters, trade magazines, industry growth centres etc.
- Raise awareness and profile via public discourse and debate (e.g. The Conversation, media interviews, newspaper articles, commentary, press releases, podcasts)
- Engage with the scientific research community through research stories published on key online science platforms (e.g. INFORMS Connects forum) and stakeholders' newsletters, such as ARC media communications.
- Recordings of weekly seminar series available on OPTIMA website and YouTube channel, ensuring engaging speakers from OPTIMA as well as visitors and high profile international speakers
- Publication of an annual report showcasing key achievements
- Publication of well-documented open-source code repositories, with "how-to" resource guides, available from OPTIMA's website.
- Articulation of available options to engage with OPTIMA (flyers, website information, videos) targeted to different sectors
- Maintain list of available projects for students (PhD, Masters, vacation) and promote on website and in social media posts
- Ensure university websites social media and marketing materials direct students to OPTIMA to encourage interest
- Develop media content to communicate the OPTIMA student experience to future students
- Ensure all OPTIMA staff and students have access to promotional materials such as business cards, approved signature files, etc.
- Internal communication across nodes, using SLACK, email announcements, updates on the OPTIMA Website and monthly MailChimp Newsletters that is also sent to our POs.

OUTREACH ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN

- Develop an outreach program to promote OPTIMA's research to undergraduate and high school students (including guest lectures, school visits, workshops) to secure the long pipeline of future workforce.
- Develop a series of optimisation challenges (online and workshop-based) for high school and undergraduate students, with prizes. Based on our industry partner problems, OPTIMA will also run industrial optimisation challenge competitions for teams of undergraduates and high school students, based on the AMSI Choose Maths outreach programs. (In collaboration with the Education and Training Committee).
- Develop outreach activities focused on women in STEM as part of International Women's Day and Women in Mathematics Day activities
- Promote OPTIMA's research (toolkit) by proposing tutorials at leading international conferences in a variety of fields
- Establish partnerships with similar research groups nationally and internationally, through joint PhD programmes and other schemes, to raise profile of OPTIMA
- Regular briefings with industry groups supported by close engagement with AMGC, NERA, the Institute of Engineers Australia, and other peak bodies, to ensure that OPTIMA has a recognised profile as the highest concentration of industry-ready optimisation technologies and expertise.
- Joint events with delivery partners (industry growth centres, professional associations, conferences, national science week, Melbourne Innovation Week, other research centres, student societies, university open days, AMSI Optimise)
- Host an annual showcase event, with a public lecture and displays, for industry and the general public to learn more about our industry projects, developing research toolkit, and our capabilities.