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Guidelines on how to define, map and engage stakeholders

Practical guidelines on how to identify, map and approach key stakeholders

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	ALTROCONSUMO Edizioni SRL
ANATOLIKI	ANATOLIKI S.A.
AULEDA	AULEDA – local Economic Development Agency
AViTeM	Agency for Sustainable Mediterranean Cities and Territories
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DECOP	DECO PROTESTE LDA
E-Institute	E-Institute, Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions
ENoLL	European Network of Living Labs
EU	European Union
FoDSA	Regional Association of Solid Waste Management Agencies of Central Macedonia
KPI	Key performance indicator
MCBO	Metropolitan City of Bologna
OCU	OCU Ediciones SA
PP	Project Partner
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
UNSA	University of Sarajevo Bosnia and Herzegovina
WP no.	Work Package, e. g. 1

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1 PROJECT BRIEF OVERVIEW

Re-thinking traditional business models, re-discovering the centrality of human value in the pursuit of innovation and competitiveness, re-viewing behaviors, all toward a circular economy model, is more urgent than ever. For this matter, to support SMEs in the repair economy, increase repair skills, and pursue the transition to more sustainable choices by overcoming the existing repair barriers.

The REPper project aims to address these challenges and propose concrete solutions to meet them. A global challenge such as sustainability, by reducing waste, increasing reuse, adopting regenerative practices and - heart of the project- implementing repair, can only be met by acting on a transnational scale.

Through 3 action areas strongly focused on cross-border cooperation: 1. Setting-up a REPper HUBS NETWORK - a unique contact point, physical and/or digital - with the aim of designing and testing a transnational network of pilot services; 2. Creating a REPper FACTORY for upskilling and reskilling, providing training at the highest EU level, to reduce imbalances between Mediterranean regions; and 3. Building a new repair culture through "gentle nudges" - NUDGING - that can trigger positive changes and new habits.

These actions will inspire joint solutions such as business model canvas, blueprint, and Nudge; strategies and action plans (Roadmap, recommendations, and policy papers); and, finally, cooperative outputs with an eye to the future: an e-pledge and a letter of interest.

To do this, REPper brings together highly qualified and diversified partners, capable of capitalizing on the past results, implementing them with new actions for public and private targets: SMEs, public authorities, sectoral agencies, business support organizations, schools and, last but not least, citizens.

2 THE DEFINITION OF STAKEHOLDERS

In the planning and development of any project, there is the involvement of numerous individuals and organizations, both directly and indirectly. These individuals and organizations are engaged in the project because they are stakeholders, meaning parties that can affect or be affected by the project and its outcomes. In fact, Eskerod and Huemann (2013) define stakeholders as "*individuals or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity and are identified by their interests in the organization, whether the organization has any interest in them*".

The identification of relevant stakeholders for the project is essential and of the greatest importance, as they can play a decisive role in the project's success. Stakeholders contribute and share their experiences, knowledge, and insights to support the project throughout its life cycle and therefore it is crucial to capture their input (Rahman et al., 2017).

The identified stakeholders can belong to the project itself or outside the project, and it is expected that various groups will be identified, such as clients or consumers, the surrounding community, policymakers, or non-governmental organizations.

In general, it is possible to identify two types of relationships with stakeholders:

- Management **of** stakeholders
- Management **for** stakeholders

When the relationship is based on the management of stakeholders, the existing idea is that the stakeholders are means to an end and does not take the needs of the stakeholder as seriously as the needs of the project. On the other hand, when the type of relationship is management for stakeholders, these are treated as having value and importance in the decisions of the project, and that good solutions involve a 'win-win' situation between both parties. The idea of having management for stakeholders is relatively simple. It involves a project designed collaboratively among various partners and identified stakeholders, meeting their needs and expectations. It is about creating as much value as possible for stakeholders, without resorting to trade-offs[1].

REPper is a project designed to remain active beyond the conclusion of the European project. This requires that the project must be developed in close

[1] https://philosophia.uncg.edu/media/phi361-metivier/readings/Freeman-Managing%20for%20Stakeholders.pdf

integration with the community. It is critical that management is done in collaboration with the stakeholders. In this sense, the desired type of management will be Management **for** stakeholders. According to Freeman et al. (2007), the stakeholder mindset and the idea of the project must be visible all the way through the project. For this, it is necessary, first, to define a detailed approach on how to identify the stakeholders of the project.

In a more in-depth analysis, the current context we live in makes the business and project landscape, such as REPper, quite complex, with significant uncertainty about the future. The REPper project should operate interconnectedly with various sectors of society, rather than in isolation, where work is developed and then presented. It should also not focus solely on a small number of stakeholders who may not represent the needs of all those who affect or are affected by this project. A project aiming for long-term sustainability (even after the project's conclusion) cannot be solely based on the idea of one stakeholder and extrapolate to the others.

Through a variation of the classic 'wheel and spoke' used by R. Phillips in Stakeholder Theory and Organizational Ethics (2003), Freeman (2017)[2] presents a representation of the idea of 'managing for stakeholders.' This representation can be consulted in the figure below:

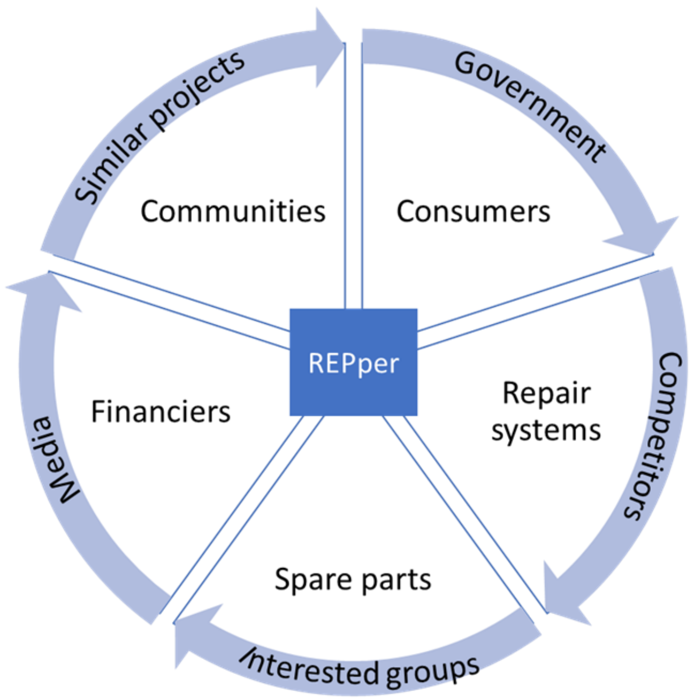

Figure 1 - The stakeholder's wheel. Adapted from "Stakeholder Theory and Organizational Ethics" (Phillips, 2003)

[2] https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2974182

In the figure above, it is possible to perceive that there are stakeholders more important than others. In this case, the stakeholders shown inside the circle should be seen as primary, and the stakeholders shown on the outside are secondary. It is worth noting that this is just an example, so each project partner should assess the importance of each stakeholder for their specific case.

Finally, it is important to clarify that the process of stakeholder identification should not only occur at the beginning of the project but at various stages of the project. This can happen sporadically or whenever there is a new activity, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are included in the project.

In this sense, it is crucial that all project members, but especially those responsible for each activity, can take a critical look at the stakeholders and are able to communicate clearly and effectively, ensuring that none of the stakeholders is isolated during the value creation for the project.

There are some questions that may be asked that demonstrate the relationship between the various stakeholders of the project and the project itself, such as: How can a consumer have products repaired if there is no knowledge for it? How can the project function if EU policies go in the opposite direction?

The purpose of this document is to inform, in a practical manner, how the main stakeholders of the REPper project should be identified, mapped, and addressed. Also, it aims to give relevant directions on how to involve stakeholders in the co-creation processes and in particular in Work Package 2 activities. In the next chapter, some tools will be presented that can be used to identify the stakeholders of the REPper project.

3 HOW TO IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS

The first step in ensuring that stakeholders are well represented and engaged in the REPper project is to identify them correctly. In this identification process, it will be necessary to segment the various stakeholders, as it will allow this analysis to be conducted for the various categories of stakeholders. One way to segment stakeholders is to use the quintuple helix model.

Figure 2 - 5-Helix approach

Through the use of this quintuple helix, the existence of 5 distinct (but interconnected) segments of stakeholders is perceptible. This model is a derivation of the Triple Helix model, which focused on collaboration with the political system, industry, and academia, and an update to the Quadruple Helix system, which further added the social system (media and public culture). The major innovation of the Quintuple Helix is the inclusion of an environmental context and how the environment impacts societies. Simply put, the Quintuple Helix is ecologically sensitive[3].

As a result of using the Quintuple Helix model in the process of stakeholder identification, mapping, and engagement, it is expected that each of the stakeholder groups can utilize knowledge from other groups and from the project itself, being responsible for the creation of knowledge. For example, a particular stakeholder may inform the REPper stakeholders about their needs and expectations, indicating how these can be met. This information may be used by another group of stakeholders. The expected functionality of this methodology is presented in the figure 3.

[3] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/2192-5372-1-2

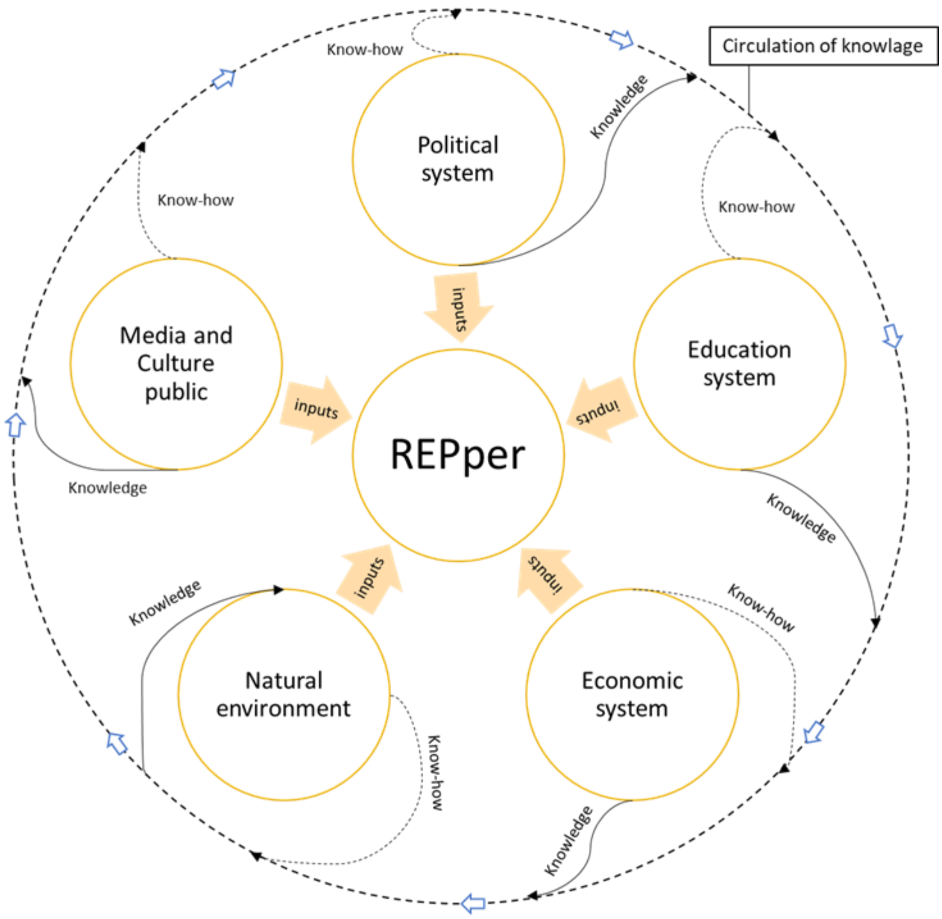

Figure 3 - The Quintuple Helix model and its functions. Modified from Carayannis et al. (2012)

The use of the Quintuple Helix model in stakeholder identification will ensure that the five dimensions considered in the model are analysed, ensuring that none of the key areas is neglected. However, this is only the first step in stakeholder identification. Now it is necessary to proceed with the effective identification of stakeholders, and for that, there are several tools that can be used. Such as:

Analysis of Documents and Records	Consultation and analysis of documents related to the project, such as the funded proposal, project plans and main objectives, policies, and regulations. This analysis will enable the identification of some mentioned or influential stakeholders in the project
Brainstorming	Conducting brainstorming sessions with the project team or activity lead. The objective of these sessions will be to foster critical thinking and identify all stakeholders who may be related to the project

Consultations with Specialists	Consulting specialists in the field of reparability of identical products. These experts may be part of the project or external stakeholders who can provide valuable information
Review of Similar Projects	Analysis of identical projects (related to reparability) to determine the stakeholders involved
Feedback from Existing Stakeholders	If the project is already underway, request feedback from existing stakeholders to identify other stakeholders who may not have been initially considered

For the identification of stakeholders in the REPper project, all the methods listed above can be used or only some of them. The use of multiple methodologies will depend on the amount of information available. For example, if the team of a particular Project Partner is small (e.g., two people), conducting a brainstorming session may be insufficient for the identification of all stakeholders. In this case, there will certainly be a need to resort to other methodologies.

Thus, it is recommended to follow the following hierarchy in stakeholder identification:

- Analysis of Documents and Records
- Brainstorming;
- Consultation with Experts
- Review of Similar Projects
- Feedback from existing stakeholders

The hierarchy presented is only a suggestion and can be changed whenever deemed necessary. It is also important to clarify that not all stakeholder identification methodologies have to be used, so identification may only involve conducting a brainstorming session.

Through stakeholder identification, it will be easily noticeable that two distinct groups will be created where each stakeholder will be placed. It will be possible to identify stakeholders as those who can affect the project or be affected by the project, as identified in the figure 4.

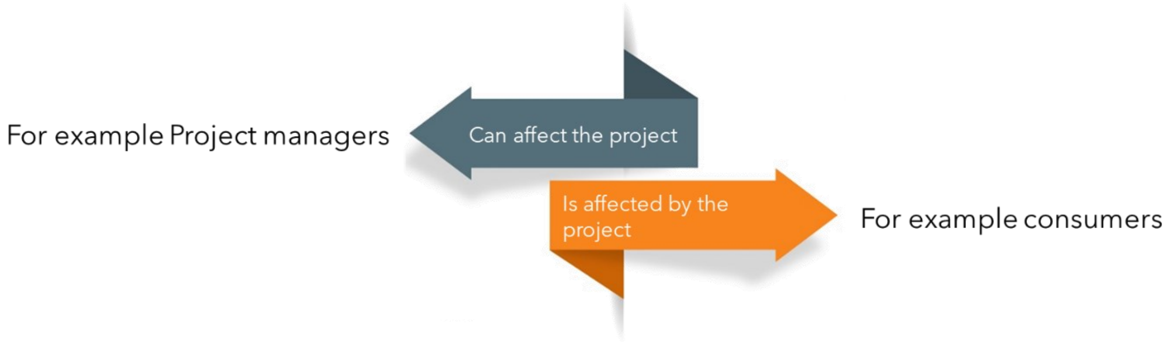

Figure 4 – Two types of stakeholders

It is particularly important to pay attention to the stakeholders who are affected by the project. Although it may seem that these stakeholders may have less relevance in the project, the truth is that it will not be possible to achieve good results or ensure the sustainability of the repair hubs after the end of the project if these stakeholders are not considered according to their relevance to the project.

At the end of this process, it will be natural for the list of stakeholders to be very extensive, and it will be humanly impossible to include all these stakeholders in the project, so it will be essential to identify their relevance to the project. This point will be explained in the next chapter.

Moreover, it's crucial to recognize that stakeholder identification doesn't solely occur at the project's outset; it's an ongoing process throughout the project's lifecycle. (Prabhakar, 2008).

4 HOW TO PRIORITIZE STAKEHOLDERS

Once the stakeholders of the REPper project for the country or activity in question have been identified, it is important to understand the importance of each stakeholder. It is natural that stakeholders do not all have the same importance, and there may even be some groups that can be considered less priority. To avoid more conflicts, Eskerod and Huemann (2013) suggest identifying and interacting with limited number of stakeholders.

Stakeholders can be classified as primary and secondary. Primary stakeholders are defined by Clarkson (1995) as "*one without whose continuing participation the corporation cannot survive as a going concern*." On the other hand, the same author defines secondary stakeholders as "*those who influence or affect, or are influenced or affected by, the corporation, but they are not engaged in transactions with the corporation and are not essential for its survival*."

In this sense, the importance of prioritizing stakeholders is perceptible since it will not be possible to give the same type of attention to everyone. To ensure that this prioritization is done correctly, there are several tools that can help. Some of these tools can be consulted in the table below.

Influence-Importance Matrix	This matrix allows for assessing the impact that stakeholders can have on the project and the influence they exert over it
Power-Interest Grid	This matrix classifies stakeholders based on their influence and interest in the project
Stakeholder Mapping	This visual tool helps identify and categorize stakeholders based on their relevance to the project

To identify the importance of each of the stakeholders previously identified, it is necessary to resort to some exercises. These exercises, presented in the previous table, can be used only once, in identifying the importance of each stakeholder for each project partner, but they can also be used multiple times, when there is the start of a different activity from the activity history, for example. It is natural that a certain stakeholder may be considered crucial for an activity, but then not be relevant for other activities, so a good principle may be to perform the importance analysis of each stakeholder whenever a new activity starts.

Regarding the tools presented, the influence/importance matrix and the power-interest matrix end up being very similar to each other. In this sense and considering that for a correct analysis of the power-interest matrix it would be necessary to contact the stakeholders to understand concretely their interest in the project, it was considered that in an initial phase it would be easier to use the influence-importance matrix. This matrix will be used in conjunction with the stakeholder mapping tool.

Firstly, it is suggested to apply the Influence-Importance matrix to the stakeholders previously identified. This matrix should follow the concept presented in the figure below.

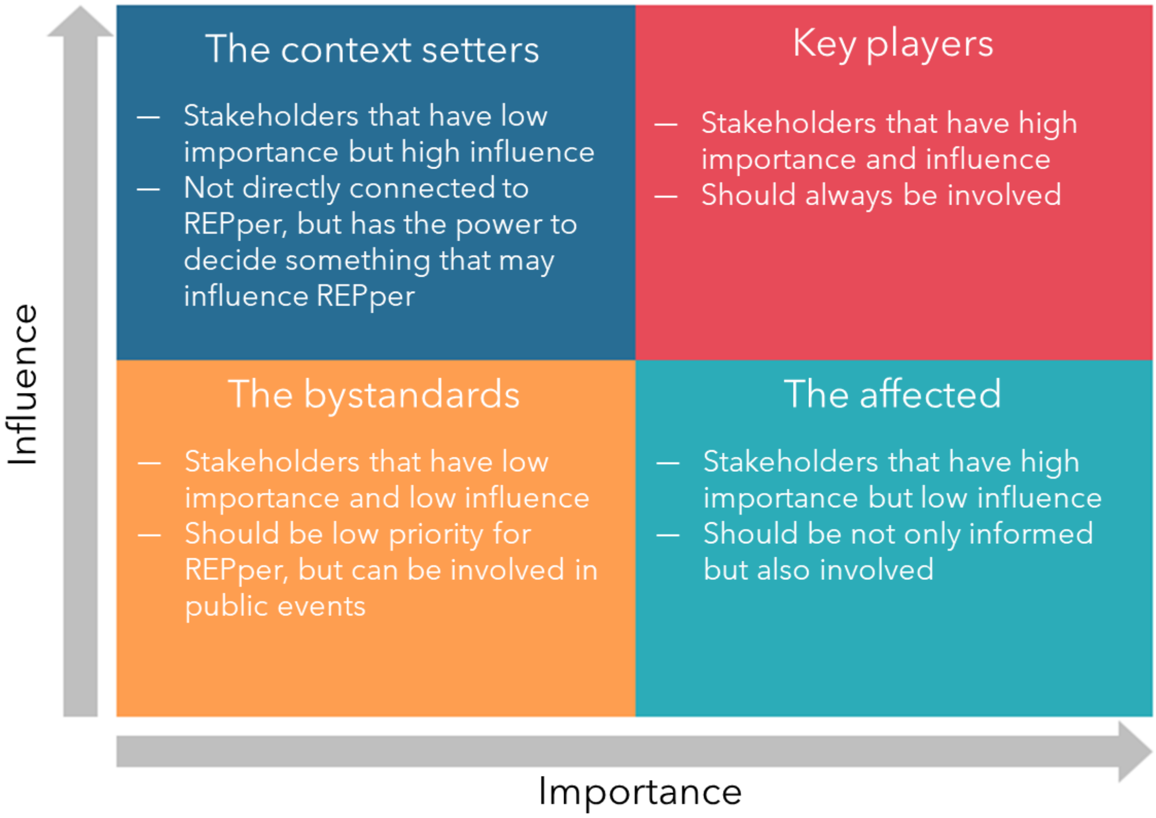

Figure 5 – The Influence-Importance Matrix

As seen in the image above, a similar chart should be prepared whenever there is a need to prioritize the stakeholders identified earlier. This need may arise at the beginning of the project or at the start of each activity, ensuring that the most important stakeholders receive proper attention from activity leaders.

This technique can help determine the key stakeholders and decision-makers. Understanding who has the most influence or who is most impacted by the project allows for efforts to be directed and key influencers to be addressed so that there is sufficient support from these groups. Regarding the tool, the importance scale serves to understand which stakeholders' needs and interests should be satisfied. The influence scale helps to understand the power each stakeholder has to facilitate or impede the achievement of an activity's objective.

According to this tool, all previously identified stakeholders must be classified according to their importance and influence on the project. In this sense, stakeholders can be classified as:

- **Key players:** All the stakeholders that have high importance and high influence in the project. These stakeholders can remain consistent throughout the project or may be specific to a particular activity, needing to be involved whenever justified. They should always be kept informed about project developments and be capable of providing useful information.
- **The affected:** This group of stakeholders is characterized by being important to the project but having little (or no) influence on it. Considering their limited influence, there may be a temptation not to actively include them in the project, but this would be a mistake. Their importance could be sufficient to dictate the success or failure of the project, so they should be actively involved in the project.
- **The bystandards:** These stakeholders have little influence and little importance for the project, so they should not have a significant impact on the project. They should be considered low priority; however, they should be included in some specific events.
- **The context setters:** Although they may not have high importance for the project, they have the power to influence the outcome of REPper, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, they should be monitored to the extent that it is possible to anticipate decisions that may impact the project's success.

After completing this exercise, it will be possible to identify different types of priorities. For some stakeholders, constant monitoring will be necessary to ensure their engagement in the project.

For others, it will only be necessary to inform them of some activities that will be carried out. However, there is another tool that can be used to get a better sense of priorities within each group.

This tool, called the Stakeholders Ecosystem Map, is quite simple to use and involves the use of a target, as shown in the image below.

Figure 6 - The Stakeholders Ecosystem Map

The idea is to place each of the identified stakeholders on the target presented. The most important and priority stakeholders should be placed in the center of the target, while the less important and relevant ones should be placed in the outer zones.

The purpose of this exercise is to understand which stakeholders are more prioritized and which ones can be considered non-priority. This tool is particularly important because it won't be possible to give the same level of attention to all stakeholders, allowing for greater focus and attention on the stakeholders that truly matter for the project.

5 UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Once all exercises of stakeholder identification and prioritization have been completed, it is important to concretely understand the needs and expectations of each stakeholder regarding the REPper project. After all, the main objective of any project is to solve problems and create value for the project's key stakeholders, and for this, it is critical that they are heard and considered throughout the project.

During this process, it is expected that it will be possible to identify the current behaviors of various stakeholders that can either help or hinder the project, with harmful behaviors being subject to change; the potential for cooperation with the project; the fears and attitudes that could harm the project[4].

First and foremost, it's crucial to understand that stakeholders' interests should be seen as a cohesive whole, intrinsically linked. That is, considering the interests of different stakeholders as a "whole" rather than "opposed." Although it can be a potentially challenging exercise since opposing interests may exist, this line of thinking will allow the interests of the project's most relevant stakeholders to be respected.

Next, it's also important to identify the best way to contact the stakeholders. Using the wrong approach can result in a lack of response and consequently, a lack of information about the stakeholder. In this regard, it is suggested to use the approaches presented in the table below.

STAKEHOLDER	STRATEGY
European Commission	Individual invitations, phone calls and bilateral or smaller group meetings can be a good idea for a first approach
Specialists	
Non-governmental organizations	Launch an open call to attract interest and widen participation. This can be useful in attracting specific categories of stakeholders or hard-to-reach groups
General consumers	Connect via social media

[4] https://books.google.pt/books?hl=pt-PT&lr=&id=NJLV1U9gplMC&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=Management+for+stakeholders+and+Management+of+stakeholders&ots=3dxAhrfBXZ&sig=PzHFIf5S1wTpJQD7V80lTCbfqx4&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Management%20for%20stakeholders%20and%20Management%20of%20stakeholders&f=false

Media	Making announcements at conferences, press calls, and in the local media can also generate a buzz and bring in new stakeholders

Finally, after contacting the relevant stakeholders, it's important to understand the needs and expectations of each group involved in the project. To do this, it is recommended to use the Stakeholders Analysis Table tool, as presented in the Appendix A. The idea is that this table contains the most relevant questions for each group of stakeholders and can be filled out so that project partners are aware of what is expected from the project, working towards achieving it.

6 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A – STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS TABLE

Stakeholder name	Contact Person	Impact How much does the project impact them? (low, medium, high)	Influence How much influence do they have over the project? (low, medium, high)	What is important to the stakeholder?	How could the stakeholder contribute to the project?	How could the stakeholder block the project?	Strategy for engaging the stakeholder	How is the stakeholder affected by the project?	Motivation	Actions to address interest
Right to Repair	-	High	High	The mission and making repairability possible	Supporting the project and giving insights	Not seeing any value in the project	Public event	-	Influence and Networking	-
General population	-	High	Low	Repair their products at low cost	Putting pressure on local decision - makers. Pressuring brands to make their products easier to repair	Not given the needed attention	Social media	Repair damaged products	Saving money	-