NGI ⏵ 4ALL

D3.3 GROWTH HACKING ACTIVITIES AND NGI AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME REPORT

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Abstract	This deliverable consists of the third version of the NGI community platform description as a follow-up of Deliverable D3.1, and the 2nd report (out of 3) describing the growth hacking activities run yearly, focusing on the lessons learned to better tailor future efforts. It will also report on the NGI Ambassadors programme status at M24.
Keywords	NGI, community, demographics, engagement and participation, behavioural pattern

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* R: Document, report (excluding the periodic and final reports)

DEM: Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs

DEC: Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc.

OTHER: Software, technical diagram, etc.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **NGI community platform** (https://community.ngi.eu/) **was set-up** to gather and engage a growing community of stakeholders, by mainly leveraging on the Open Calls that the current NGI Research and Innovation Actions (RIA) are running or will run, as a first selling point for acquiring a significative number of newcomers (applicants, namely startups and SMEs), but these will not be the only stakeholders to attract.

The goal of the platform is to **attract and engage the players of the NGI ecosystem**, all the "doers", the start-ups, the researchers, the innovators. The objective is to create a dynamic community where synergies are found and where content and crucial information is gathered.

As first stakeholder's entry point, the community platform is aimed at converting the deal-flow of applicants to NGI RIAs open calls into active users within the community, by following a **growth hacking plan**, described in detail in D3.1, to achieve the highest distribution of contents with minimum budget.

In this 3.1 Deliverable, the NGI community platform and growth hacking plan were laid out. This document reported the features and services of the NGI community platform, (launched in April 2019 and publicly announced on July 2019), as well as the main players to be engaged, and described the planned growth hacking activities to be pursued to ensure active engagement of users to the platform and more in general to the NGI dialogues.

The current document is Deliverable D3.3, the second out of three planned during the project's duration, describing the actions taken in the framework of the **NGI Community Growth Hacking Plan during the 2nd year of the NGI4ALL project** (January to December 2020), as well as detailing the status at M24 of one of the core activities undertaken within year 2, the **Ambassadors Programme**.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CPA	Cost per acquisition
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
DAU	Daily Active Users
DoA	Description of the Action
GDPR	EU General Data Protection Regulation
IP	Internet Protocol
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MAU	Monthly Active Users
NGI	Next Generation Internet
RIA	Research Innovation Action
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SSO	Single Sign-On
TCP	Transmission Control Protocol
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WAU	Weekly Active Users

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this deliverable, as outcome of the **WP3 NGI INSIGHT**, is to offer a tactical plan with actions to take to foster the distribution, dissemination and **growth of NGI online Community Platform.** This plan is based on two methodologies explained in detail in D.3.1, that have been used to populate and dynamize the NGI Online Community:

- **Growth hacking methodology:** which refers to a set of both conventional and unconventional **marketing experiments to expand a business, using low-cost alternatives** to traditional marketing, like social media, viral marketing or targeted advertising. And following the growth hacking funnel:
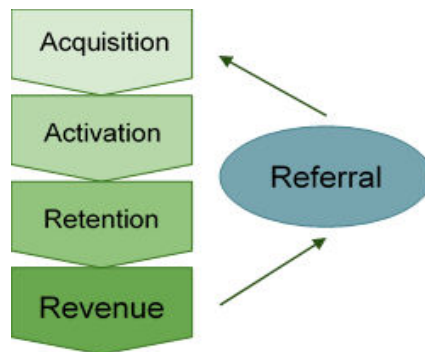
FIGURE 1: GROWTH HACKING FUNNEL

- **The Inbound Marketing Methodology** applied to the Growth Hacking[1], is focused on attracting members through relevant and helpful content and adding value at every stage in the attraction and conversion journey. This way, potential members for the NGI community discover the NGI platform through channels like blogs, search engines and social media, among many others. This methodology includes four steps to convert strangers into promoters, as shown in the figure below:

FIGURE 2: INBOUND MARKETING METHODOLOGY ACCORDING TO HUBSPOT

Hence, this document contains:

- An update of the D3.1. The NGI Community Platform and Growth Hacking Plan issued in month 5.

- A second version of D3.2 Growth hacking activities and NGI Ambassadors Programme issued on month 12 (December 2019).

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[1] According to HubSpot which is the definition used in NGI4ALL: https://www.hubspot.com/inbound-marketing

- It also identifies **good practices** that the project will follow up on in the following months and the **next steps** of the growth hacking plan to increase the members acquisition and retention of the community.

The lead of **community engagement and "market" research analysis** is led by **FBOX (in charge of WP3)** with specific support from Martel leading Task 3.3 aimed at sustaining liaisons and a continued, content-rich debates, especially with representatives of the Future Internet Forum and NGI Contact Points.

2 NGI COMMUNITY GROWTH HACKING AND ACTION PLAN

The **NGI Community Growth Hacking Plan** aims to build the largest online community about the Next Generation Internet initiative in Europe.

The plan has been **structured following the Growth Hacking Funnel** and the inbound marketing methodology explained in Section 1, which have been integrated in a joint growth hacking funnel, with its **techniques and actions that will be detailed in this section**.

As already explained in previous deliverables (D.3.1.), the 'Revenue' step of the funnel was removed. Instead, this online community aims at spreading the word about NGI initiative to strengthen its brand awareness, disseminating the success stories and the experiments, as well as at increasing the applicants for the NGI initiative open calls. All this will help to enhance the earlier adoption of Next Generation technologies by the European SMEs and mid-caps.

2.1   ACQUISITION – ATTRACT

The **first phase of the growth hacking funnel** focuses on the acquisition of members, which means attracting them according to inbound marketing. It is the first contact a stranger is going to have with the product, so it is important to develop some actions to create brand awareness and trust to **make that stranger become a visitor**.

Acquisition - Attract

Actions
Influencer marketing
SEM Strategy
Mailing
Online events
Open Calls
Blogging (posts by community members)
Branded content & cross dissemination agreements

Outcomes
+ 2,572 NGI Community members

FIGURE 3: GROWTH HACKING FUNNEL: ACQUISITION – ATTRACT

All actions in this regard up to month 12 of the project were included in D3.2, and the actions explained hereunder are those developed during since then (January – December 2020), which have helped grow the NGI Community to a total of 2.572 members (on date 15.12.2020)

2.1.1 Influencer marketing (the NGI Ambassadors Programme)

As previously explained in D3.1 and D3.2, the influencer outreach main goal is to create brand awareness reaching a specific target through **influencers with big communities of followers** on social networks.

In that regard, the **Ambassadors Programme** is paramount to catalyse the NGI dissemination and communication proposed by NGI4ALL, and to shape and give live to the NGI INSIGHT platform and community.

As it has been demonstrated in the months that the programme has been running, the best way to do so is to work with a range of consolidated figures in the Internet and business space acting as ambassadors, creating awareness through their digital channels and at the same time being active in the community platform providing knowledge, expertise and valuable content. This programme is key to create a crowd knowledge base repository and a thrilling and active community.

The programme intends to sign up **at least 30 Ambassadors** during the project (**10 influencers and 20 contributors)**. The ambassadors' categories and their functions were explained in depth in D.3.2.

In summary, the main task of an NGI ambassador is to energize the community by interacting with it through the platform and external networks. In addition to these dissemination/interaction tasks, the ambassadors are asked to prepare a webinar or several additional publications depending on their category (Top influencer or top contributor).

At the moment of writing this report, **5 top influencers** and **8 top contributors** are collaborating with the project, with several more in talks to be onboarded.

A **balanced gender and geographical distribution** is also taken into account in the recruiting process. At the moment, the ambassadors come from 6 different countries and a 25% of them are women. so far, 5 of them European. Further efforts will be focussed in increasing this geographical distribution and also in closing the gender gap.

Regarding the type of ambassadors, it is worth mentioning that the programme **not only involves individuals but also entities**, with 2 already part of the programme.

The 13 Ambassadors that have or still are active within the Programme, have provided the following results in regards to the activation/dissemination of the community:

- A **joint following of 324.000 people**, related to the areas of interest of the NGI initiative.
- **43 Posts** in the community and social media, related to themes such as AI and Big Data or Blockchain, updates of the ecosystem, etc. Some examples can be found here and here.
- **8 NGI Talks**, in topics such as cybersecurity or digital identity, with around 800 attendants/views at the moment of writing this report. With 3 more in the works for Q1 2021.

For more detail on the actions implemented and those planned for the Ambassadors Programme, see **Section 3**.

2.1.2 SEM (Search Engine Marketing)

One of the actions that is contemplated in the plan to create awareness about the community and to bring new members to it, is the use of online paid ads. This form of advertising is recommended in order to reach a specific audience through the Internet.

For that, a brief pointing out the needs of the NGI community was developed and sent to different marketing agencies. Once their proposals were received, an evaluation was

conducted and a marketing agency selected to set up and manage an **online ads campaign through AdWords²,** as explained in Deliverable 3.2.

The **campaign was launched on the 3rd of February 2020**, and will have a duration of 12 months. Its objectives, platforms and targets are explained in Deliverable 3.2.

The **strategy** was designed and followed considering the interests of the NGI community. The main objectives as mentioned before were

- build awareness for NGI's Community,

- drive traffic to the community portal,

- and generate signups.

The **platforms** chosen to carry out the Ads campaign were:

- Google Ads (Search, Display Network),

- Facebook Ads (Facebook, Instagram, Messenger),

- LinkedIn Ads,

- Twitter Ads.

Through these platforms and with these defined objectives, the **main targets** were **Innovators, entrepreneurs, developers, start-up founders and researchers** with projects that specialise in AI, DLT, Robotics, Machine Learning, Open Source, or Digital Identities. The creatives created to support the campaign were based on the NGI brand guidelines. A first group of creatives was used from February 2020 until the end of May 2020.
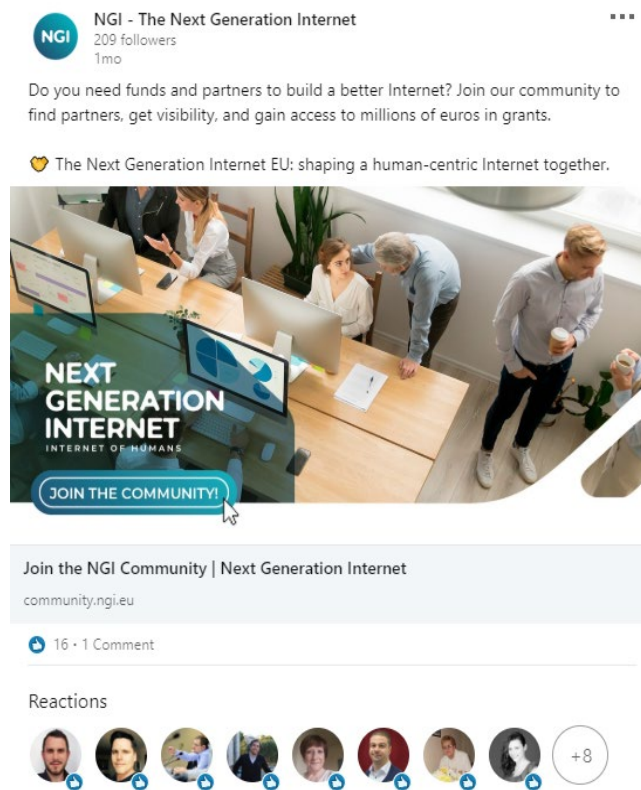
FIGURE 4: NGI COMMUNITY CREATIVITY IN LINKEDIN

² **AdWords**: Google AdWords is an online advertising service developed by Google, where advertisers pay to display brief advertising copy, product listings, and video content within the Google ad network to web users.

In June 2020, additional creatives were also developed under the brand guidelines of NGI with the objective of giving a new look to the campaign and increasing engagement with it.
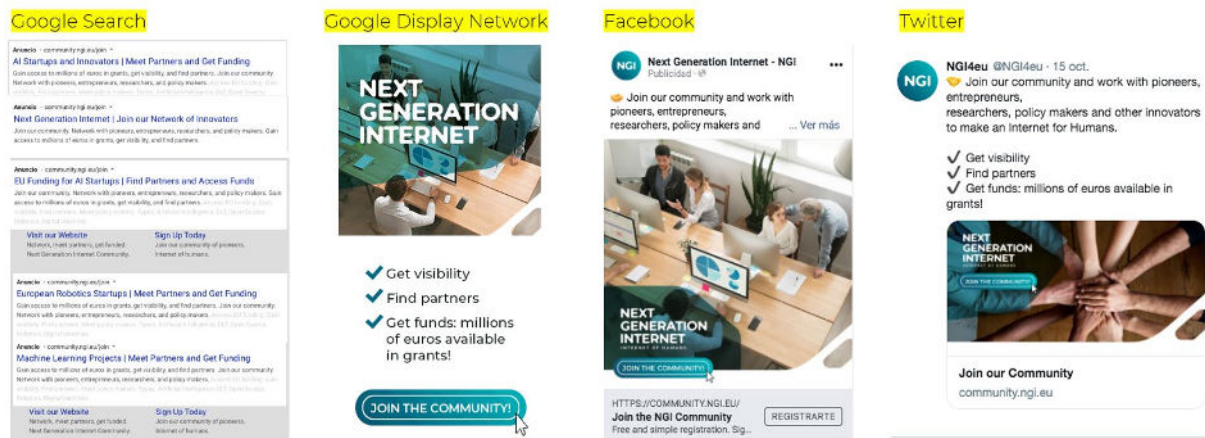
FIGURE 5: SAMPLE OF NEW NGI AD CREATIVES

Different considerations have been taken into account while running the campaign during 2020:

- **February:** the campaign was launched in 9 countries (The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Norway). The point of that was to 'cast a wide net' early on and identify from the start the best-performing networks and locations.

- **March:** the campaign was mainly focus on the United Kingdom, Ireland and Eastern Europe (10 countries).

- **April:** focused on the Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal.

- **May:** Germany was the chosen country for this month. The target was split into two main sub-targets - male and female.

- **June:** targeted to France, continuing also with the split of male and female.

- **July and August:** The campaign was stopped considering the summer holidays that brings less interaction for this kind of ads campaign.

- **Between September and December:** the campaign was resumed and focused on all European countries, especially those with the best results in previous months (United Kingdom, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, Germany, Croatia, Estonia, France, Ireland and Spain).

Since the campaign was launched, **more than 5 million ads impressions** have been generated through different channels, creating a significant online awareness about the NGI community in the countries targeted so far.

The contact with the contracted agency has been constant, which has allowed us to know the results of the campaign month by month and has made it possible to make adjustments when necessary. The budget has also been controlled month by month and distributed according to needs and previous results.

The **main campaign indicators** from February 3rd up until December 9th 2020 are gathered below:

8.261,16 €	5.397.421	45.677	1.929
Budget spent	Ad impressions	Ad clicks	Landing page CTA clicks

82,20%	32,88€*	5,53€	0,85%	214**
Bounce rate	CPA	CPC	CTR	Signups
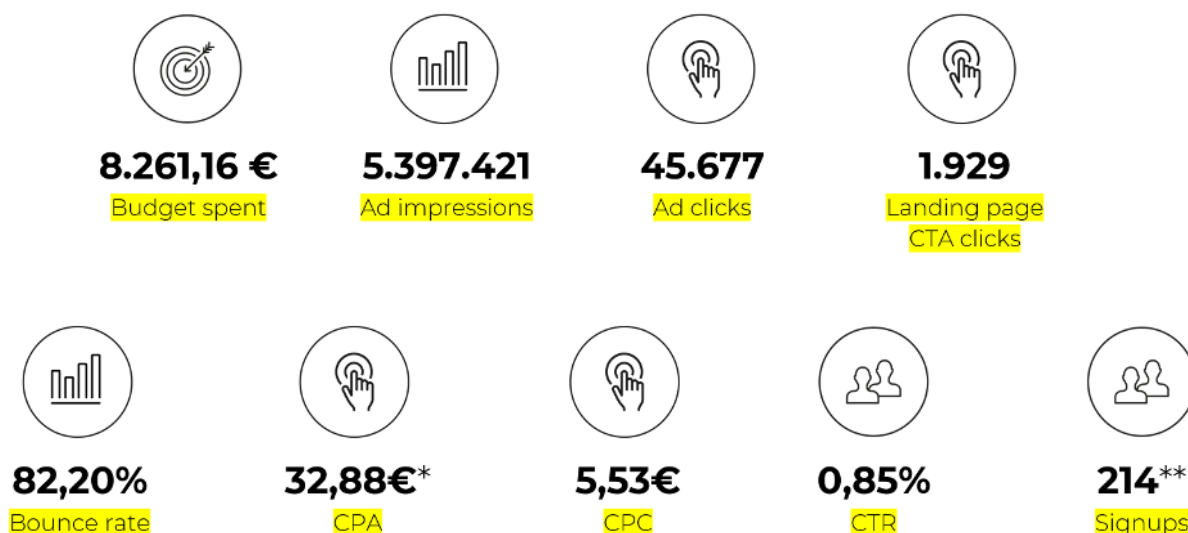
FIGURE 6: MAIN ADS CAMPAIGN INDICATORS

* Average CPA (Cost per acquisition) from May to December.

** Campaign signups from May to December. Due to an error the tracking of signups was not configured during the firsts months and was set up around the end of April.

Hereunder, the **results per platform** from February 3rd to December 9th 2020 can be analysed:

	Spent	Impressions	Clicks	CPC	CTR	CTA clicks	Bounce rate
Google Search	2.941,11 €	115.282	6.899	0,43 €	5,98 %	721	75,96 %
Google Display	2.252,28 €	2.786.877	29.214	0,08 €	1,05 %	1.526	83,81 %
Facebook	2.367,87 €	2.010.215	8.249	0,29 €	0,41 %	24	94,54 %
Twitter	248,00 €	363.384	858	16,25 €	58,80 %	7	85,17 %
Twitter (1°)	163,25 €	89.514	139				
LinkedIn	288,62 €	32.152	103	117,94	0,05	9	77,46 %

FIGURE 7: ADS CAMPAIGN: RESULTS PER PLATFORM

As it can be seen in the above figure, the two **channels that have been more effective** for the campaign are **Google Display** and **Facebook**. They have the lowest Cost per Click (CPC). On the other hand, Twitter and Google Search have the most significant Click Through Rate (CTR), which means the percentage of clicks over impressions. Considering the higher CPS of LinkedIn, the campaign was stopped on that channel after March.

Regarding the **results per country** the figure hereunder shows the overall results obtained in the top-performing countries in our paid campaigns:

Country	Sessions	Average session duration	CTA clicks	Signups ▾	New users
United Kingdom	1.701	00:00:33	100	35	1.418,00
Romania	2.609	00:00:29	189	30	2.248,00
Bulgaria	3.394	00:00:29	115	17	2.828,00
Italy	1.755	00:00:36	65	15	1.336,00
Poland	740	00:00:35	55	14	678,00
Germany	3.840	00:00:26	207	13	3.150,00
Spain	1.484	00:00:44	63	9	1.035,00
Portugal	4.669	00:00:27	242	8	3.763,00
Croatia	1.000	00:00:38	71	8	784,00
Netherlands	1.925	00:00:40	203	7	1.524,00
Estonia	156	00:00:50	11	6	138,00
Ireland	417	00:00:32	25	6	360,00
France	6.341	00:00:27	162	6	4.746,00
Hungary	740	00:00:18	44	5	658,00
Lithuania	513	00:00:18	28	5	440,00
Belgium	1.185	00:00:26	107	5	891,00
Sweden	193	00:00:46	22	4	164,00
Denmark	118	00:00:47	10	3	107,00
Finland	94	00:00:45	8	3	87,00
Latvia	493	00:00:36	18	3	405,00
Austria	100	00:00:39	16	3	87,00
Total	**36.339**	**00:00:30**	**1.944**	**214**	**29.222,00**

FIGURE 8: ADS CAMPAIGN: RESULTS PER COUNTRY

United Kingdom is the country with more signups. This could be because ads are in English, so more English users would use our keywords to research in Google than other countries.

While the "CTA clicks" show the number of clicks earned on the landing page to start the sign-up process, the "CTR" (click-through rate") is the best indicator of a country's overall interest for the community.

The "Signups" show the number of signups tracked in Google Analytics, although as previously mentioned, this data was not configured during the firsts months and was set up around the end of April.

All in all, **the campaign has brought an estimated number of 214 members to the community.**

2.1.2.1 NGI Community & Talks Social media adverts

In the year 2020, the promotion of the NGI online community and the invitation to potential members to join it has continued through NGI social media networks, in this case more focussed in the Ambassadors and their NGI Talks, which lead back to the Community.

We have made 13 posts on the NGI Twitter channel, that count for 20.184 impressions and 268 engagement actions. On Facebook, we have made 3 posts in the NGI page, that count for 210 impressions and 14 engagement actions. And on the in the NGI LinkedIn group, we have made 4 posts, that count for 728 impressions and 5,47% average engagement.

FIGURE 9: POST IN THE NGI TWITTER GROUP INVITING MEMBERS TO JOIN MANUELA'S BATTAGLINI WEBINAR

2.1.3 Online events

The COVID 19 outbreak implied a radical change on the events organization for all the sector and the consortium is fully aware of the possibilities and opportunities linked to digital or hybrid events.

In that sense, a **mapping of online events** until April 2021 was done and the partners are continuing to manage online events presence through live tweeting, contacting organisers and managing speakers' slots and partnerships.

For more detail on the main events that the consortium has attended/participated during the last twelve months, such as the My Data Conference or the Internet Global Forum, see D2.4 NGI Charisma Report.

Also, all the events of interest for the ecosystem are shared in the NGI Community and are accessible in the Events Collection, where all members can add events or subscribe to the events calendar. At this moment, a total of **162 events** have been published, with a total of **2.498 views**.

As part of the online events strategy is worth mentioning the NGI Talks organised within the NGI Ambassadors Programme, and described in Section 3.

These talks are an action not contemplated in the GA, which was added due to the relevance of the topics proposed by the experts, and it was transformed in a monthly occurrence in the form of a "NGI Talk series" as a mitigation measure related to the COVID-19 situation. This series consists of a monthly web event (as an average), in the form of a webinar, a round table or a panel discussion from relevant members of the ecosystem.

2.1.4 Open calls

As explained in deliverable D3.2 in December 2019, the dissemination of open calls, the same way that the events, is used as a hook to attract new members to join the NGI online community. All calls of interest for the ecosystem are shared in the NGI Community and are accessible in the Open Calls Collection.

At this moment, a total of **49 Open Calls** have been published, with a total of **3.354 views**. (on date 14.12.2020).
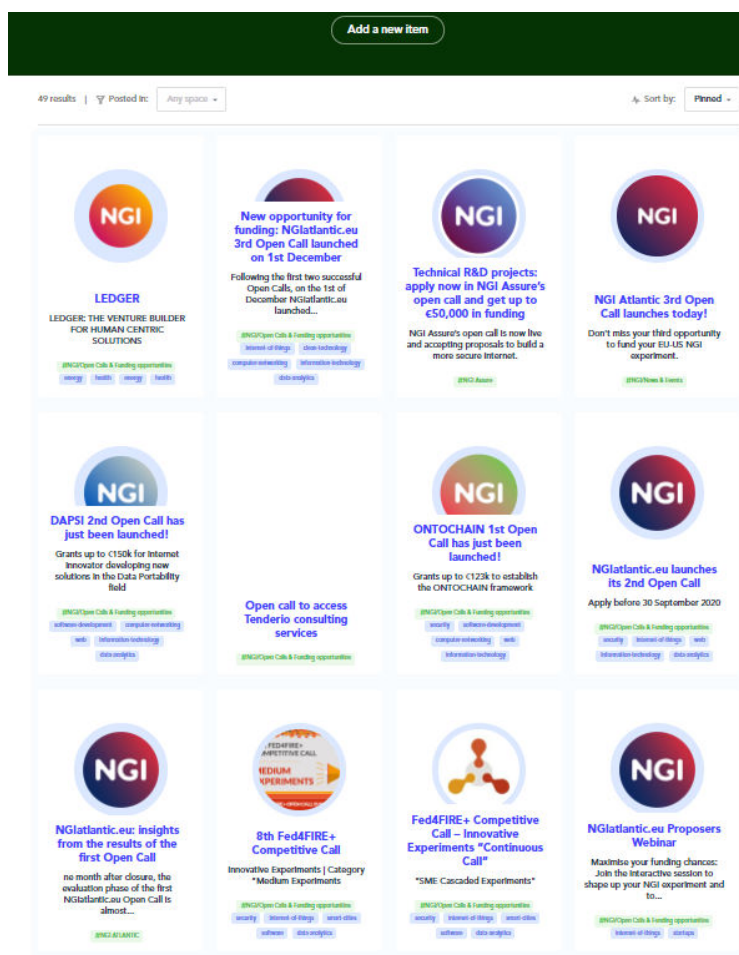
FIGURE 10: OPEN CALLS COLLECTION IN THE NGI COMMUNITY

2.1.5 Blogging

In order engage future members within the NGI online community, a blogging strategy was defined to spread the right message through educational content that speaks to potential new Ambassadors and answers their questions. FundingBox has coordinated the publication of contents in the NGI Community Platform, through specific posts in the Announcements collection of the community.

Up until now, **113 announcements** have been published, with a total of **4.080 views** (on date 14.12.2020).

2.1.6 Mailing

As in previous periods, already reported email campaigns have been key to acquire members for NGI Online Community. We can differentiate two types of actions regarding emails:

- **NGI Newsletter**: In 2020, 3 newsletters and 8 newsflashes have been sent out. In the total of the project 10 newsletters have been launched for the **2.987 subscribers**.

- Targeted email campaigns and partners Newsletters: We have identified that targeted emails campaigns are a good practice when speaking about acquiring new members for the community. This action has been led by FundingBox, but partners have also sent emails to their databases inviting their contacts to join NGI Community during the project. Also, the occurrence of events in the community, such as the NGI Talks, and the NGI community in general is disseminated through some partners Newsletters, such as the **FundingBox Newsletter, with 29.000 subscribers**.

eSSIF-Lab Self-Sovereign Identity Framework! eSSIF-Lab is calling for internet innovators to develop technical enhancements and extensions of eSSIF-Lab's SSI Framework with up to €155,000. Applicants should be able to work in an agile way with regular communication and interaction with other participants in the eSSIF-Lab ecosystem, together developing the eSSIF-Lab Framework and testing the interoperability of delivered components. **Apply before 4 January 2021!**

For other open calls that will be launched in the coming months, **check the FundingBox Community!**

EVENTS

19 November: Robot Union session 'Innovations in Practice', at the 'AI & Robotics Innovation' webinar organised by Asia Pacific Assistive Robotics Association. Join deep discussions around technologies that help humans to adapt around complex tasks and discover future technologies and proposals to humanised technology. **When & Where?** At 08:00 CET (15:00 DST). More info and registration details right here.

24 November: NGI Talk 'The Next Generation Internet: The Internet of Humans'. The Next Generation Internet initiative is designed to create an Internet of humans that responds to our fundamental needs, including trust, security and inclusion. Join the NGI Talk, this time chaired by internet experts who will be discussing how redesigning the Internet and interconnection ecosystems can help the society. **When & Where?** At 13:00 CET. More info and registration details right here.

26 November: Token National Event 'Connecting Europe through blockchain and self sovereign identity: A discussion on its benefit for public services'. Blockchain technology has enormous potential to enhance the way that citizens, governments and businesses interact, by enhancing trust between entities and improving the efficiency of operations. Don't miss this event and join a

FIGURE 11: NGI DISSEMINATION THROUGH THE FUNDINGBOX NEWSLETTER (NOVEMBER EDITION)

- Another set of targeted **emails are those sent to the RIAs to** offer/encourage them to join the NGI Community and **inviting them to create their own Spaces**. The Outreach Office will keep contacting other NGI projects, making a continuous follow up of the newcomers, in order to onboard them in the community.
  As it will be explained in Section 2, the community is currently hosting 4 NGI RIAs communities (eSSIF-Lab, NGI Atlantic, NGI Pointer and NGI Assure), which provides the possibility to make cross-dissemination of contents and news.

2.1.7 Branded content and cross dissemination agreements

One of the actions that is contemplated in the plan to create awareness about the community and to bring new members to it, is the use of branded content, which is very effective in order to reach specific audiences.

For the detail in all branding actions (initiatives branding, NGI projects branding and NGI innovators co-branding) please see D.2.4. NGI Charisma report.

Although all branding actions have an impact in the NGI Community, the most relevant in this case would be the NGI Ambassadors programme and related **NGI Talks** described in Section 3 of this document.

Another way of bringing traffic, content and members to the NGI Community are **the cross-dissemination agreements** signed with other entities/initiatives. During the period reported an agreement has been reached with EURID, that is the organisation appointed by the EC to operate the .eu domain. This collaboration is planned for webinars and cross-dissemination, and they would participate in our Ambassadors programme. At this moment a webinar is being planned for February involving one of the Ambassadors (Aljosa Pasic, expert in cybersecurity from Atos), the Security Manager from EURID and with the collaboration of Joao Ceron (network security researcher engineer at SIDN labs).

Another example of this liaison would be the **organisation of joint events**, such as the Funding Continuity Day: an event organised by FundingBox in June 25th 2020, which featured a mix of webinars, fireside talks, panel discussions with the participation of figures from several EU innovative projects, where NGI participated through the NGI Talks, with 4 interventions (3 of the project's ambassadors with a webinar each, and a general NGI presentation):

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- Next Generation Internet - Internet: The world of tomorrow is on its way
- Aljosa Pasic (NGI Ambassador) - Cybersecurity for teleworking
- Manuela Battaglini (NGI Ambassador) - Digital contact tracing & the future of privacy.
- Daveed Benjamin (NGI Ambassador) - The power of viral misinformation and fake news in COVID-19

2.2   ACTIVATION – CONVERT

The **second phase of the growth hacking funnel** focuses on the activation of members, which means to convert newcomers into leads. For this, a series of actions have been also implemented:

- The offering of the **spaces to the RIAs** (because this Space is kind of a **landing page** they can have within the community, also they can take great advantage of these spaces by using them as helpdesks during the period their calls are open, and also to disseminate their events and calls).

- The different **calls to action** that can be made or get through to the community (such as deadlines for application to calls, for events, and so on).

Activation – Convert

Actions
Spaces for RIAs (Landing page, communication & dissemination)
Calls to action (announcements, events, Open Calls)

Outcomes
113 announcements published
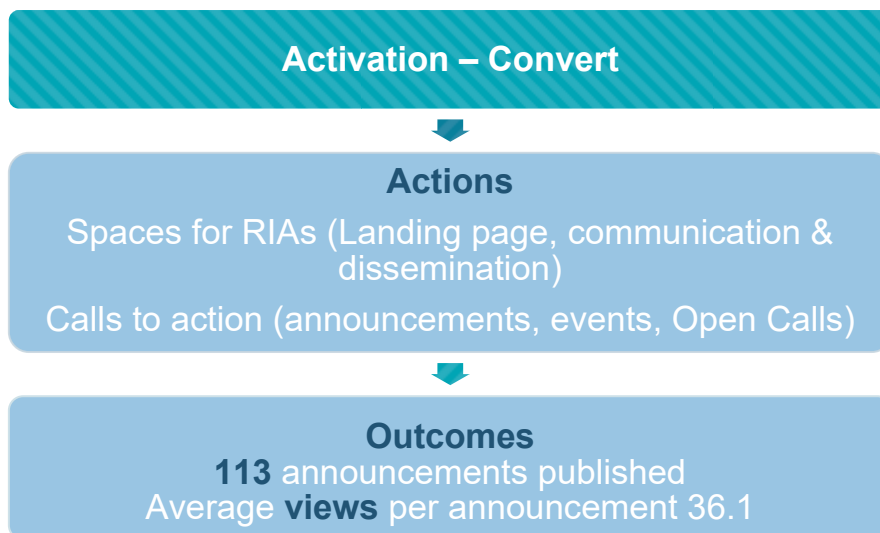Average **views** per announcement 36.1

FIGURE 12: GROWTH HACKING FUNNEL: ACTIVATION - CONVERT

All actions in this regard up to month 12 of the project were included in D3.2, and the actions explained hereunder are those developed since then (January – December 2020), which have helped reaching a total of 113 announcements published, with an average per views that have more than doubled since last year, going from a little over 17 in January, to over 36,1 by the end of 2020. (data gathered on date 14.12.2020)

2.2.1   Landing pages – Spaces for the RIAs

To convert newcomers into leads it is very important to create attractive landing pages with appealing information about the NGI online community: clear concept message, reasons to join the community, images and call to action button in order to motivate newcomers to join the community. **A lead would be someone that visits the platform and could potentially sign up** (by filling a form) because of its interests and/or profile. The registration process is easy and intuitive, although the content is accessible for any visitors without the need for registration (only required for interaction).

During the last year the community has continued to grow with the focus on making this process as clear as possible in order to retain those members who joined long ago but also with the aim of attracting the attention of those who visit the community.

The NGI portal is an interactive forum in constant growth that is able to rapidly adapt in terms of structure (Spaces and/or Collections) and features to the needs of its members.

In the case of the **Spaces, these are sections where information related to a specific topic** is posted, hence, act as a landing page, where members can publish content, start private conversations with other community members within the platform, or create conversation groups with three or more participants.

In order to foster the activation of the NGI Community, the NGI4ALL team is **approaching the RIAs and encouraging them to create their own Spaces**, so they can share their own contents and communicate with potential interested members, who can ask them direct questions regarding the Open Calls or other aspects. At this moment, the following RIAs have created their own Spaces within the NGI Community:

- NGI ATLANTIC Research and Innovation Action.
- NGI POINTER Research and Innovation Action.
- eSSIF-Lab Research and Innovation Action.
- NGI Assure Research and Innovation Action.

2.2.2 Calls to action

To convert the visitors and increase the possibilities for them to join the community, it is very important to have attractive and very visible **call to action buttons** to join the community.

Both the NGI portal and NGI Online Community contain buttons inviting to join the community and the Ambassadors Programme, as well as disseminating the NGI Talks. These call-to-action buttons have been reworked/added to make them more attractive/accessible:
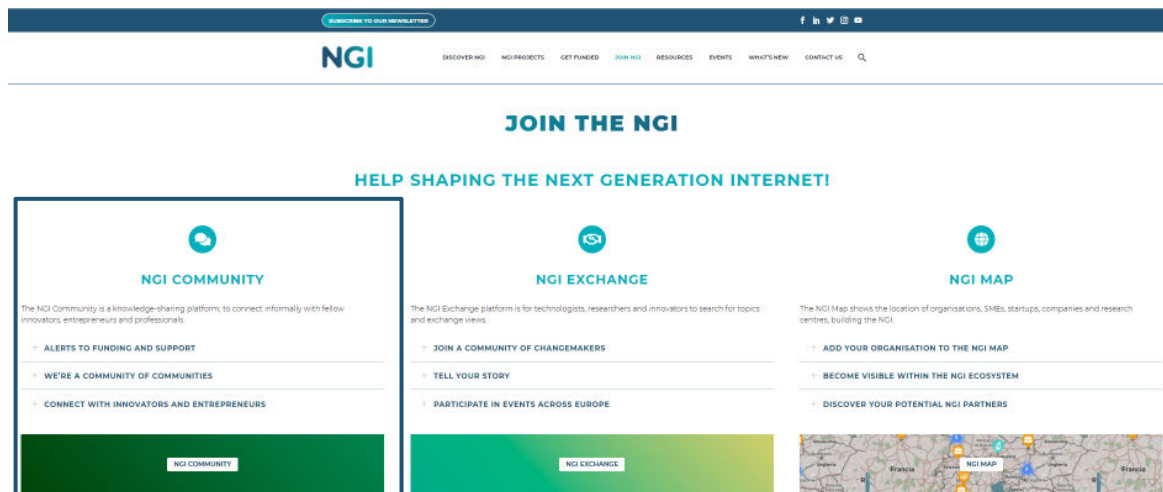
FIGURE 13: NGI PORTAL BUTTONS INVITING TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY (NGI PORTAL)
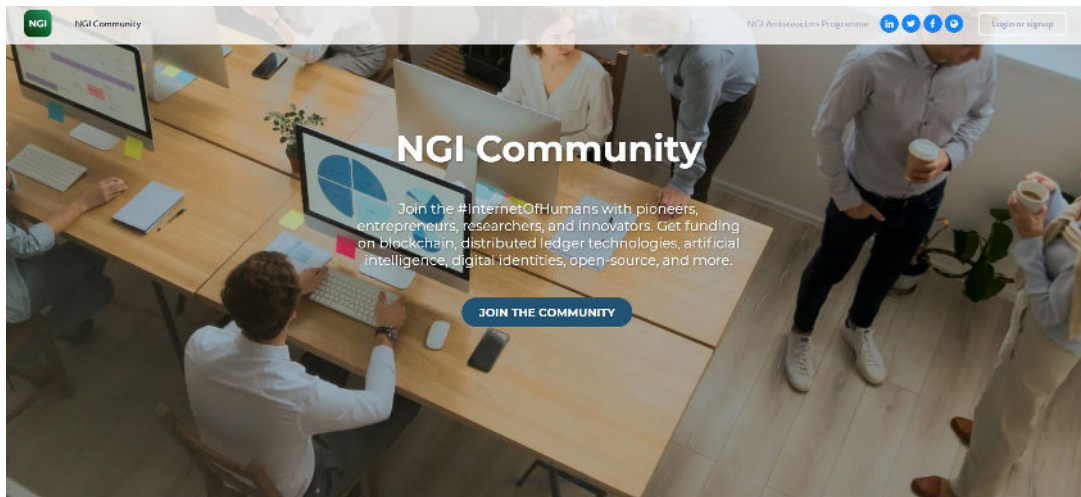
FIGURE 14: NGI BUTTONS INVITING TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY (NGI COMMUNITY LANDING PAGE)

The NGI Online Community microsite: https://community.ngi.eu/, includes also an access to the Ambassadors Programme information.
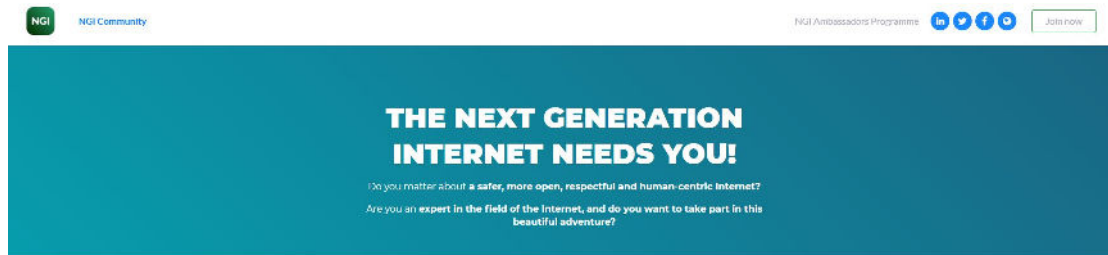
FIGURE 15: NGI BUTTONS INVITING TO JOIN THE AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME (NGI AMBASSADORS LANDING PAGE)

And the same thing happens with the ngi.eu website, that includes the buttons in their main page:

FIGURE 16: NGI TALKS BUTTON AT NGI.EU HOMEPAGE

2.2.3 Mailing - Contacts

All the contacts having agreed in receiving NGI communications receive targeted information depending on their interests. Having all the data in one place helps to make sense of every interaction you've had with your contacts and optimize your future interactions to more effectively attract, convert, close, and delight your ideal members. **We have 2.572 community members (on 15.12.2020) and 2.987 subscribers to the newsletter.** Moreover, we also have lists of emails of leads gathered having shown their interest in NGI activities.

Post-contact e-mails after events were regularly sent before COVID-19, currently the process is stopped since there are no face-to-face events. This action will return as soon as physical events come back.

2.2.4 Remarketing / Retargeting[3]

Remarketing campaigns are used to convert the target that already knows NGI, but hasn't converted yet, which means they are not members yet. The main tools to do remarketing are mailing, social networks and AdWords.

As described in Section 2.1.2 SEM (Search Engine Marketing), FundingBox launched the first full Social Media Campaign of the NGI Community, and a Marketing Agency was subcontracted to launch the programme.

The strategy of the Campaign has been frequently revisited in order to refocus on the targets that work best. The final results of this Media Campaign will be known after February 2nd 2021, when it ends.

Also, The NGI Community is an interactive forum in constant growth that is able to rapidly adapt in terms of structure (Spaces and/or Collections) and features to the needs of its members.

2.2.5 Workflows

It is a key point in any growth hacking strategy to study where the traffic comes from to understand the performance of the actions and campaigns in order to improve their results. Following the steps established in previous periods as well as taking into account the comments of the EC after September 2020 review meeting (see further references to these recommendations in Section 2.7 next steps), following actions will be carried out to address the mentioned concerns:

- **New release of the community**: It will be launched by the end of December 2020, it includes features to foster the improvement of engagement rates, as well as their follow-up, such as detailed analytics of the most active members and relevant posts, and new tools like charts to help visualize the data.

- **Monthly follow-up of the engagement rates**: A monthly follow-up has been put in place using the following formula: ((comments + reactions / posts) / members) x 100. At this moment it shows an upwards tendency (after the summer break) as it can be seen hereunder:

Follow-up date	Total Post	Comments	Reactions	Total Members	Engagement Rate*
June, 2020	550	246	220	1663	5,1%
July, 2020	569	248	231	1761	4,8%

[3] Remarketing: Remarketing shows ads to people who've visited your website or used your mobile app. When people leave your website without buying anything, for example, remarketing helps you reconnect with them by showing relevant ads across their different devices.

August, 2020	590	256	246	2178	3,9%
September, 2020	636	273	422	2324	4,7%
October, 2020	662	282	572	2487	5,2%
November, 2020	703	305	682	2541	5,5%
December 15th 2020	795	316	838	2572	5,6%

TABLE 1 : NGI COMMUNITY MONTHLY ENGAGEMENT RATE

*Regarding the engagement rate, it is worth mentioning that according to industry standards (although it varies slightly depending on the social media and the source consulted), rates between 1% and 3,5% are considered as average/good, while those over 3,5% are considered as high engagement rates. Taking into account that the NGI Community's data for the last 6 months has always been over 3,5% and growing, the latest data shows promising results.

2.3   RETENTION - DELIGHT

At for the last few months, and specially for the coming year of implementation, **the third and fourth step of the hacking funnel (retention and referral) are the focus** of the growth hacking strategy.

In the case of **RETENTION – DELIGHT**, the objective is to keep the users coming back to the NGI Community, and for this we are working on keeping the community updated with the latest information, as well as proposing **regular activities that offer value** to the members.

Retention - Delight

Actions
Latest news (notifications, digests, events calendar);
Funding opportunities (Calls)
Networking (interaction between ecosystem members, surveys)
Support (Q&As, Helpdesk)
Content (articles, news, funding, NGI Talks)

Outcomes
Increase of **users returning and interacting**
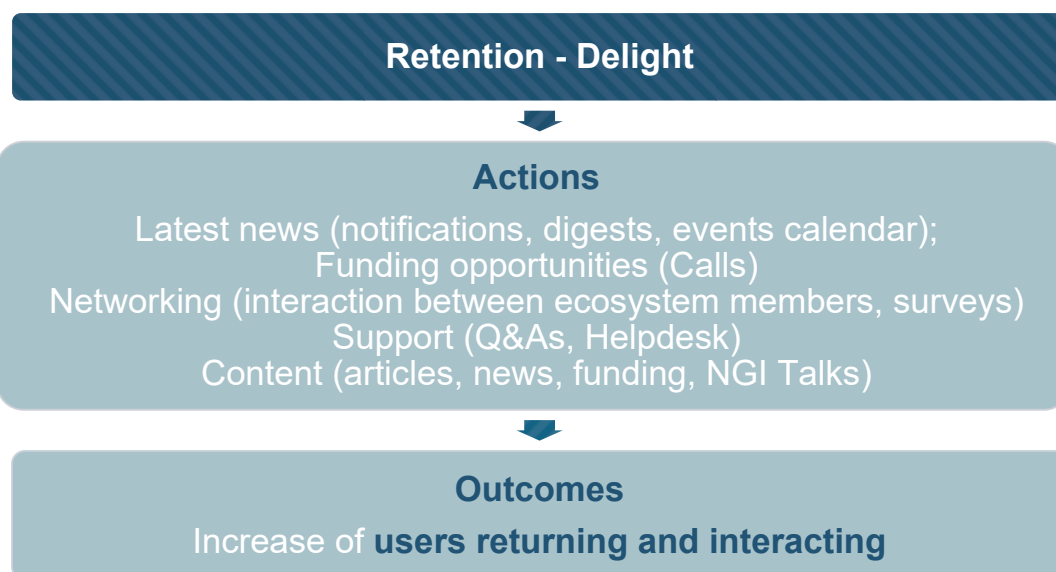
FIGURE 17: GROWTH HACKING FUNNEL: RETENTION - DELIGHT

The **outcome** of the actions implemented on this phase is to keep the users returning and interacting. As a means to reach this outcome, the following actions are put in place:

2.3.1   Mailing

To make sure we retain members, along with the version community which will be launched at the end of 2020, a new mail system is planned for the first quarter of 2021. The main objective is to be more engaging towards newcomers easing the overall understanding of the NGI initiative and the main features and advantages of the Community**.**

These crafted "welcome messages" will be developed to activate the members and dynamize and are to be send during the first months of 2021 (Q1).

Also, the targeted emails, including those addressed to new RIAs (in this case reminders), will keep being part of the strategy for this retention stage.

2.3.2 Surveys

Following the previous action about an email onboarding/retaining process, we plan to send a survey to the community members to get **feedback about their user experience** and the content provided. This will be sent in the first quarter 2021. From there, specific actions will be taken to make improvements in the community.

2.3.3 Content

This NGI Community platform wants to be the **place to go for anyone wanting to know more about NGI, to find opportunities and specially to interact.**

Hence, the **content is one of the key added values** and main hooks that keep a member interested in login into the community again. This content is continuously updated and curated to the needs of users.

To make this content more approachable and accessible, **the platform has a STRUCTURE OF SPACES AND COLLECTIONS that you can see in the image below.**
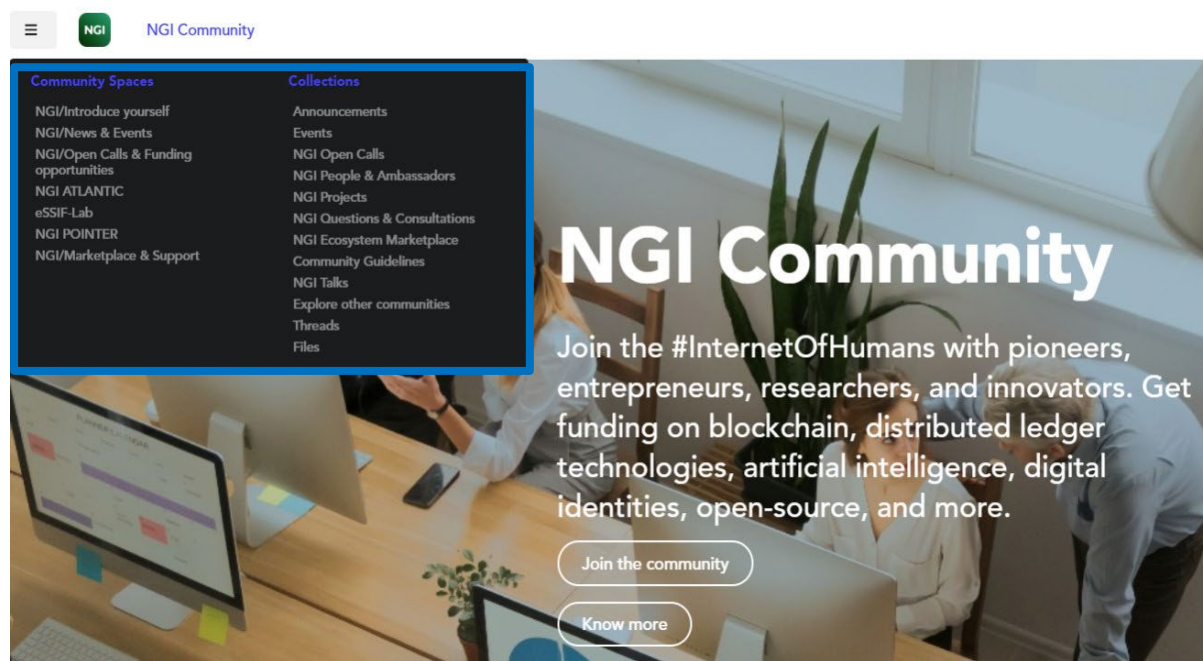

FIGURE 18: NGI COMMUNITY SPACES AND COLLECTIONS

The **Spaces** are sections where **information related to a specific topic is posted**. Currently there are 8 and they can be <u>transversal</u> (such as <u>Introduce yourself</u> , <u>News and Events,</u> <u>Marketplace & Support</u> or <u>Open Calls and Funding Opportunities</u>), or be dedicated to specific NGI RIAs (as already mentioned, <u>POINTER</u>, <u>NGI ATLANTIC,</u> <u>ESSIF-LAB</u> **and** **<u>NGI Assure</u>** **have their own spaces** in the community).

All RIAs have the opportunity if create their own space, as an easy way for them to reach the more than 2.500 members of the NGI Community or the more than 30.000 members of the FundingBox Communities.

Then we have the **Collections**, which **store in one place all those contents with a similar objective or characteristics** (such as webinars, Q&As, open calls, events and so on…). Currently there are more than 10 Collections, dedicated to topics such as <u>Announcements</u>, <u>Events</u>, <u>Open Calls</u>, <u>NGI People & Ambassadors</u>, <u>Questions & Consultations</u> or the <u>NGI Talks</u>.

Through these **SPACES and COLLECTIONS, the platform** organises the content shared by the members**, such as events, open calls, articles, webinars and so on.** The intention behind this structure, which is very adaptable, is to make it very interactive, by:

- including features that foster collaborative work, facilitate interaction and provide relevant information on best practices, trends in the market,

- Making the community the place to get the **latest information** regarding all the mentioned content items and an easy way to be updated on it, because you can activate notifications and summary emails.

- It is an easy way for the members of a community to be updated on the latest developments, network with their peers, meet potential partners and **reach in a very direct and immediate way other members of the ecosystem**. Connecting with them, creating private conversations or a group chat.

- Also, being a place to ask questions and getting support to beneficiaries, as we will see in the following section.

The community has also the usual **general sections**, such as:

- The **About**, which is a landing page with basic information about NGI.

- A **Directory** with all the players in the community, for anyone interested in engaging with others.

- And a **Search Tool**, to filter the information.

2.3.4 Helpdesks - Q&As

In order to be more useful and attract more members, the **NGI Community can be used as a Helpdesk or a Support Space**, where visitors can ask and solve their questions regarding the NGI Programme itself, of regarding any of the RIAs that have Spaces hosted in the Community.

This is being done in several ways:

- Each RIA can hold their own Q&A sessions in order to solve questions related to their Open Calls, etc.

- Also, the NGI Community includes a specific NGI Questions and Consultations Collection where all the FAQs and solved queries are kept, in order to facilitate the access to this information. For example, in this collection we can find the compiled FAQs from the following RIAs:
    - NGI Assure 1st Open Call.
    - ESSIF-LAB Open Calls Q&A list.
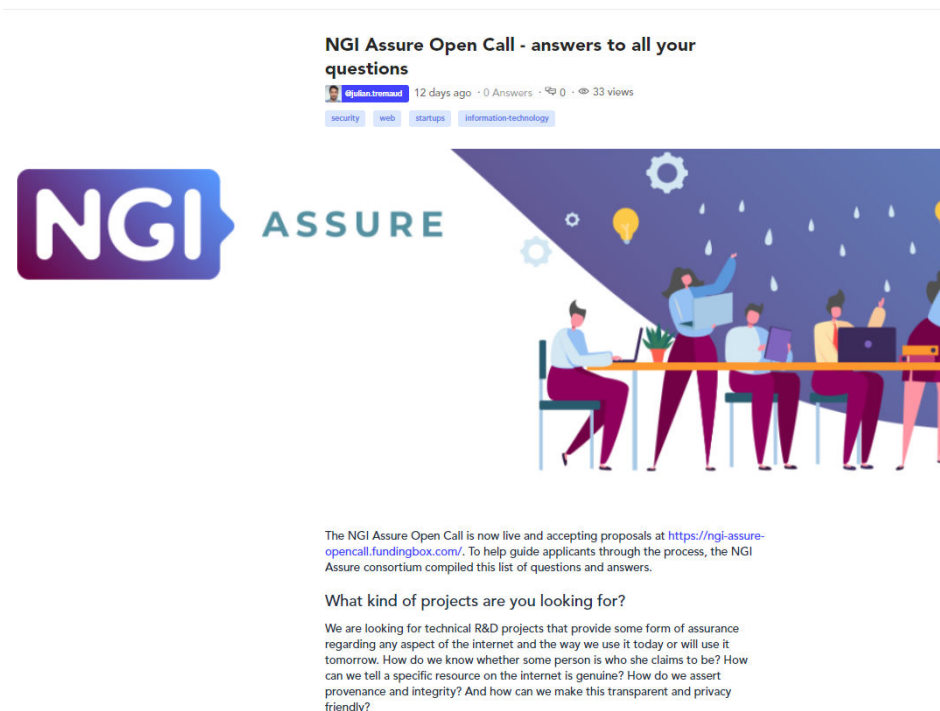   - NGI POINTER Open Call 1 Q&A list.

FIGURE 19: NGI ASSURE POST WITH FAQS COMPILATION FOR THEIR OPEN CALL

2.3.5 Social Monitoring

Social media networks (mainly LinkedIn and Twitter) have been used to share content, interact with our users and get feedback, as previously explained in this document in the section 2.1. Acquisition - Attract.

As it is explained in section 2.8 Next Steps, this is an aspect that will be closely monitored, as the team will work in using more in-depth analytics to assess the activity and also to conduct a survey of the members and users to identify the value of the platform and if changes are to be made. Also, actions to leverage on the success of one social media channel (for example LinkedIn) over others will be explored.

2.4 REFERRAL

Last, but not least, the fourth phase of the growth hacking funnel is the referral phase. If all the previous steps have been done successfully, the members of the community should be the ones making the community grow organically by inviting their peers.

In this step it is worth mentioning how the NGI community is behaving in terms of **SIZE** and **GROWTH:**

- In the last months the growth has been exponential as it can be seen in the period from July to Mid-December 2020, where it has gone from 1.695 to 2.572 members. Hence having a 51,7% of growth in 6 months.

- A similar circumstance happens with the interactions, that from August to Mid-December 2020 have gone from 1.100 to 1.949. Hence having a 77% of growth in 6 months.

> **Referral**
>
> ↓
>
> **Actions**
> New products/features: Content sharing options for social media; Button to invite.
> Incentives: events tickets contests, online events
>
> ↓
>
> **Outcomes**
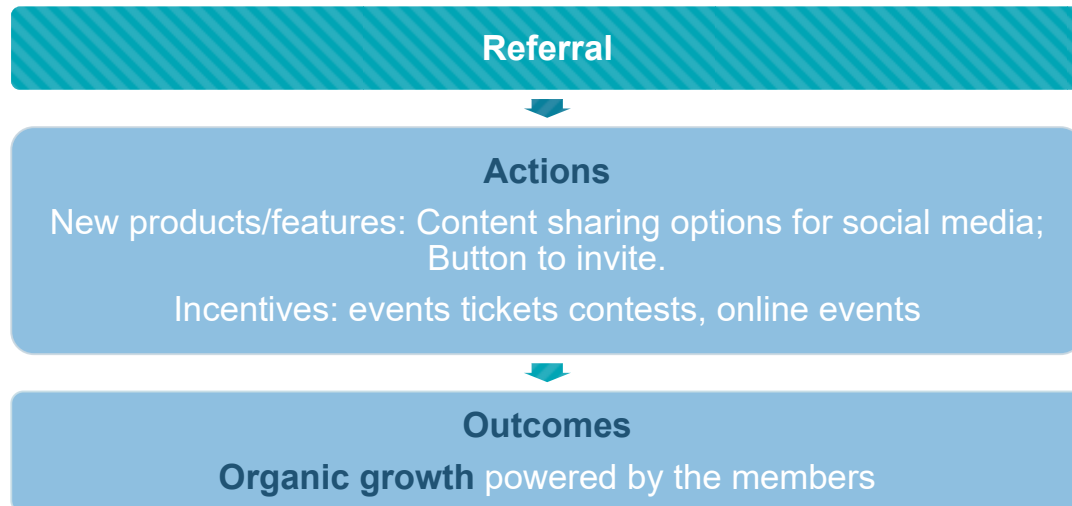> **Organic growth** powered by the members

FIGURE 20: GROWTH HACKING FUNNEL: REFERRAL

Nevertheless, from FBOX we are always working on improving the features for the dissemination of the community and to foster its growth in a simple way for the user. That is why, as proposed after the review meeting last September 2020, leveraging actions between LinkedIn account/NGI community are being discussed, analysing how to optimize their interaction. For example, by using the reposting feature of the community when sharing the content in LinkedIn and other social media, instead of making a direct post. This way the reader is seamlessly made aware of the existence of the NGI the Community.

Also, the team will make a conscious effort to **better explain the advantages that the NGI Community offers** to its members and to the social media audiences (showcase of results, repository of resources, dissemination, networking, chat, embedded web meeting feature, helpdesk…).

On the other side, some specific actions to invite people to join the community, such as offering free tickets to events, have not been carried out in the last few months due to the COVID 19 outbreak, but will come back as the circumstances allow it.

Also, and as explained in previous sections, free online events have been created for the community, such as the "NGI Talks", as a mitigation measure.

2.5   GOALS

The main goal at the beginning of the project was to get **2.400 members in the NGI online community** by the end of the project (December 2021), including **30 influencers engaged as ambassadors**. Up to now, we have got **2.572 members** (15.12.2020) which means that the KPI has been achieved after the community was launched 18 months ago.

Regarding the ambassadors, **13** have joined the programme so far, and several more are in talks for doing so. The full KPI is expected to be reached by the end of 2021.

In terms of **interactions** among its members (being these the sum of messages, replies/comments and reactions), the goal was to **achieve 1.400 interactions** by the end of the project. Up to now, we have got **1.949 interactions** (15.12.2020) which means that the KPI has been reached.

As for the **number of visitors** to the NGI Community, there are **over 30.795** visitors (16.12.2020), so the full KPI target of 20.000 has also been fully reached.

After the review meeting held in September 2020 and further meetings held with the EC, a revision of these KPIs was recommended. The revision proposed was an increase of a 25% as follows:

- Nº members: from 2.400 to 3.000

- Nº visitors: from 20.000 to 25.000

- Interactions of members: from 1.400 to 1.750

2.6   TARGETS

The aim of this growth hacking plan is to get a dynamic online community filled with different profiles, which means a variety of targets to reach. With this precedent in mind, groups of targets were already considered in previous deliverables such a D.3.2. A first group composed of Start-ups, SMEs and midcaps, RTOs, **NGI RIAs and CSAs**, regions, European networks, national/regional platforms, **aggregators of SMEs**, corporates, IT facilitators, researchers, **SMEs who participated in previous open calls, early adopters club members, and influencers.** And a second group consisting of **investors, training providers and funding experts.**

The percentage of the previously mentioned target groups within the NGI Community can be learnt from a survey launched by FundingBox in 2019. As a result of this survey, it was estimated that a 60% of the community members are start-ups and SMEs, a 20% are Researchers (academics & corporate) and 20% belong to other profiles such as investors, training providers or funding experts.

Before the official launch of the community emails were sent to **the three main targets** (see D3.1) that became early adopters to form a pilot community. As explained, adapted messages were prepared differentiating three main targets with their own campaign and approach. Those main groups were **intermediary organisations**, **RIAs** and **CSAs** and **beneficiaries who already participated in NGI ecosystem.**

In regards to targets, it is worth mentioning that to increase the outreach of the NGI community, all new RIAs are being contacted to onboard them into the community, explaining to them all advantages and possibilities for interaction, not only among innovators but also between other members of the ecosystem, such as the RIAs partners themselves.

Also, new contents/actions are currently being explored by the partners in order to keep adding information relevant for the members, such as a potential expansion of the NGI Ambassadors' programme and activities (this is being discussed within the NGI Visibility Task Force – Working Group 3, dedicated to Ambassadors and explained in Section 3.1).

2.7   METRICS AND KPIS

Every growth hacking plan has metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to prove the success of the actions and campaigns done to achieve the objectives.

According to this, the main KPIs of this growth hacking plan are the community members, but there are some other indicators taken into consideration as well. Below there is an update of KPIs and targets to reach in this growth hacking plan until the end of December 2021:

KPI	Target	Achieved*
Community Members	2.400	2.572

Daily Active Users (DAU), Weekly Active Users (WAU) and/or Monthly Active Users (MAU)[4]	15% DAU	16,11% DAU (2020)
Churn[5]	<50%	82,20%
CPA[6]	€2,22	3,64€
Leads	490	214*
Impressions/Reach (from paid campaigns)	3.333.912	5.397.421

TABLE 2: KPIS AND TARGETS

It is worth mentioning that, as it was noted in section 2.1.3, the signups (leads) were not being tracked correctly during the initial months of the campaign (February to end of April 2020).

The KPIs concerning **Churn**, **Leads** and **Impressions/Reach** come from the social media campaign of the NGI Community launched on the **3rd of February 2020**. As described in Section 2.1.2. SEM (Search Engine Marketing), this campaign is currently under process and will last until **February 2021.**

2.8   NEXT STEPS

In the future, in order to keep populating NGI Online Community and to make it vibrant and engaging for members, we plan to do the following actions according to the growth hacking funnel, as well as taking into account the recommendations from the review meeting held in September 2020 and further discussions with the EC and among the consortium:

Actions to increase the performance, engagement and user experience:

- **Reinforced use of analytics** and data monitoring through the monthly follow-up of the engagement rates (already started in August 2020, with an upwards tendency since then). See initial data in Section 2.2.5. Workflows.

- In order to get a better understanding of the user needs, a **survey** will be distributed among the members of the community in the first quarter of 2021, in order to better understand and enhance their experience, identify the value points, as well as increase their engagement.

- A **new release of the NGI Community platform** will be launched at the end of 2020, this new release includes features that will help in the improvement of engagement rates (such as providing detailed analytics for the most active members and relevant posts - leaderboard- and adding the possibility of extracting charts). See hereunder the relevant analytics features highlighted.

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[4] Daily, Weekly or Monthly Active Users (DAU, WAU, MAU), refer to unique number of users who are "active" within a given amount of time. "Active" users mean among others: "signed-up" or any other "interactions" like comment or post.
[5] **Churn**: The churn rate is a measure of the number of individuals or items moving out of a collective group over a specific period. It is one of two primary factors that determine the steady-state level of customers a business will support. Churn rate is an important input into customer lifetime value modelling, and can be part of a simulator used to measure return on marketing investment using marketing mix modelling.
[6] **CPA**: Cost per acquisition (CPA), also known as "Cost per action" or pay per acquisition (PPA) and cost per conversion, is an online advertising pricing model where the advertiser pays for a specified acquisition - for example a sale, click or form submit (e.g., contact request, newsletter sign up, registration etc.). In the case of the NGI online community, for click to the call to action.
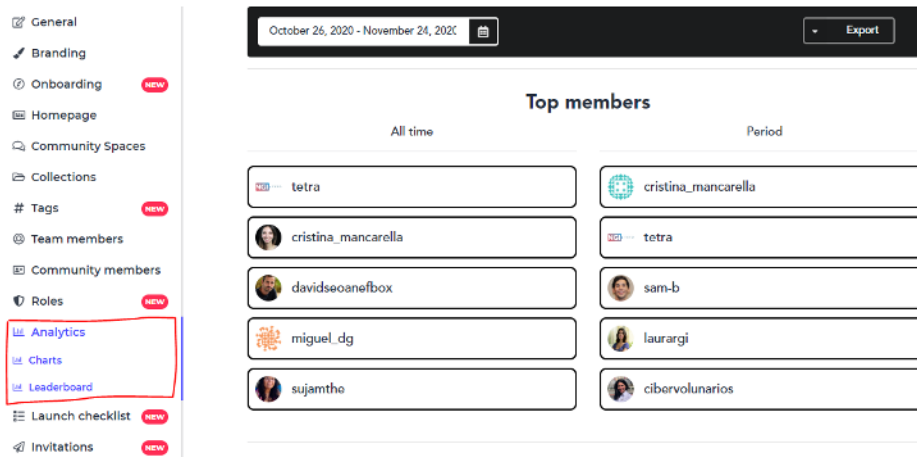
FIGURE 21: NGI COMMUNITY NEW RELEASE – ANALYTICS FEATURES

- **Leveraging actions** between LinkedIn account/NGI community will be discussed, analysing how to optimize their interaction. For example, by using the reposting feature of the community when sharing the content in LinkedIn, instead of making a direct post, the reader is seamlessly made aware of the existence of the NGI Community.

Actions to refine the set of messaging and presentation of content:

- The **messages** regarding the advantages/features of the community (content organisation, showcase of results, repository of resources, embedded web-meeting's feature…) will be **reworked to better reach the members** and social media followers.

- The new release of the community will include a new layout of the "my account" section, making **data and privacy management more approachable** for users. These upgrades will be fully explained in the next update of the Data Management Plan.

- To provide more clarity on the value and purpose of the NGI community platform and to better explain what NGI is about, an **"info-package" will be sent for the newcomers** to the community, containing clear and short "pills" of information about NGI's what, who, when and how.

Actions for a more active community management and outreach to a broader set of stakeholders:

- **RIAs will be individually contacted** for the presentation (demo) of the NGI Community features/possibilities for interaction, and in order to increase their onboarding rate and foster their involvement.

- In **the NGI Visibility Task Force** and within the **Working Group dedicated to "Expand the NGI Ambassadors' programme and activities",** an expansion of the Programme will be explored in order to reach a broader set of stakeholders. For example, by adding new profiles from other relevant actors of the ecosystem not approached yet, or from the point of view of the ambassador expertise, such as the innovator or the policy profiles.

3 NGI AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME

Another way for the NGI Initiative to create brand awareness is the **NGI Ambassador Programme**, by recruiting influencers with big communities of followers on social networks in NGI relevant areas.

The Ambassadors Programme mindset and rationale, along with the onboarding process of the recruited members, and the detail on the activities that it involves is described in detail in *D3.2 Growth hacking activities and NGI Ambassadors Programme* issued on month 12 (December 2019),

3.1 The NGI Ambassadors

This Ambassadors Programme is paramount to catalyse the NGI dissemination and communication proposed by NGI4ALL and to shape and give life to the NGI INSIGHT platform and community. It is currently showcased in the NGI Community landing page here and invites **both individuals and institutions** to join. The NGI4ALL consortium performs frequent active search for relevant profiles (following current events on the ecosystem, experts in topics of interest, influencers on NGI areas).

Moreover, two categories of ambassadors were established: **Top influencers** and **Top contributors** depending on the number of followers (above or below 20K), with slight changes in the actions required from them. These actions are basically related to the dynamization of the NGI Community, and the organisation of online events.

As explained in D3.2, once the Ambassadors confirm their commitment to participate, a **welcome e-mail is sent** in order to guide the onboarding and first steps as a member of the community. Within the email, a set of "Introduce yourself guidelines" and initial tasks is outlined. It is always about being as clear as possible so that the new Ambassador can start generating content as soon as possible and in the easiest way.

Once the Ambassador has started the cooperation then a check-list of actions needs to be completed by the Ambassador. The contact with the ambassadors is frequent, in order to keep them active and follow their performance until the completion of the agreed tasks.

Dissemination materials and banners are elaborated for all Ambassadors joining the Programme.

FIGURE 22: INTRODUCTORY BANNER FOR CIBERVOLUNTARIOS

Since the beginning of the Programme and up to the moment of drafting the current report, the general numbers are:

- **13 Ambassadors** signed (+1 in process)
- **2 categories**: Top Influencer (5) / Top Contributor (8)
- 3 of them are women and 2 are institutions
- 6 different countries, 5 of them European.
- Total following of more than 324.000 people.
- It is worth mentioning thar several of the Ambassadors recruited or participating in the NGI Talks have been selected as the **"50 Top Digital Influencers to Follow at the end of 2020 & 21"**[7]. This is the case of **Antonio Grasso** (n16) and Antonio Vieira Santos (n26), participating in Antonio's NGI Talk (See Section 3.2).

Hereunder we can see a summary table with their category and other data:

Ambassador	Area of expertise/Profile	Category
Alex Puig	CTO at Caelum Labs, Co-Chair Digital Identity Working Group at INATBA;	Top-Influencer
Ester Liquori	Founder/CEO of ghostwriter.ai, helping marketers to boost productivity of content creation; Entrepreneur; Speaker;	Top-Contributor
Antonio Jara	CEO at HOPU (Smart Cities / Air Quality);	Top-Contributor
Aljosa Pasic	Technology Transfer Director at Atos	Top-Contributor
Daveed Benjamin	CEO at Skōōl, Founder of Bridgit;	Top-Contributor
Manuela Battaglini	CEO and Co-Founder of Transparent Internet	Top-Influencer
Sudha Jampthe	IoT Disruptions CEO, Advisor, Author, Stanford CSP Instructor: IoT, Autonomous Vehicles, Artificial Intelligence;	Top-Contributor
Pierre-Yves Danet	Orange Labs Head of cooperative Research Europe	Top-Contributor
Antonio Grasso	Digital Transformation Advisor; B2B Tech Influencer; Author & Speaker; Startups Mentor; Founder & CEO @dbi.srl;	Top-Influencer
Luigi Assom	Founder of Nifty Works	Top-Contributor
Sam Butler	Creator of whatican.org; Co-Founder of interspace.chat	Top-Contributor Deluxe
Fundación Cibervoluntarios	Non-profit organisation created to promote the use and knowledge of technology as a means to bridge social gaps, generate social innovation and citizen empowerment.	Top-Influencer
Eurid	Non-profit organisation appointed by the European Commission to operate the .eu top-level domain	Top-Influencer

TABLE 3 : NGI AMBASSADORS

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[7] https://twitter.com/MarshaCollier/status/1338898371923292163?s=20

At the moment of writing this report, discussions are in progress to onboard another Ambassador, and a recruitment campaign will be launched to increase the participation on women and representatives from underrepresented countries in the above group.

It is also worth mentioning that within **the NGI Visibility Task Force** created after the NGI Project Coordinators' meeting in September 2020, a **Working Group dedicated to "Expand the NGI Ambassadors' programme and activities"** has been established and has already held a first meeting in December to start the discussions. The final actions to further consolidate the NGI Ambassadors Programme will be decided by the end of January and put in place immediately afterwards.

3.2 The NGI Talks

Though not initially planned in the GA, the webinars implemented within NGI4ALL have been integrated in a branded programme called "**NGI Talk series**". These webinars are **organised by the NGI Ambassadors** with the assistance of the FundingBox marketing team.

This series consist on web events, in general happening on a monthly basis; it could be a webinar, a round table or a panel discussion from relevant members of the ecosystem, certainly streamed but also made available afterwards to all audiences through:

- The NGI website with a button at the homepage www.ngi.eu

- The NGI Talks Collection at the NGI Community

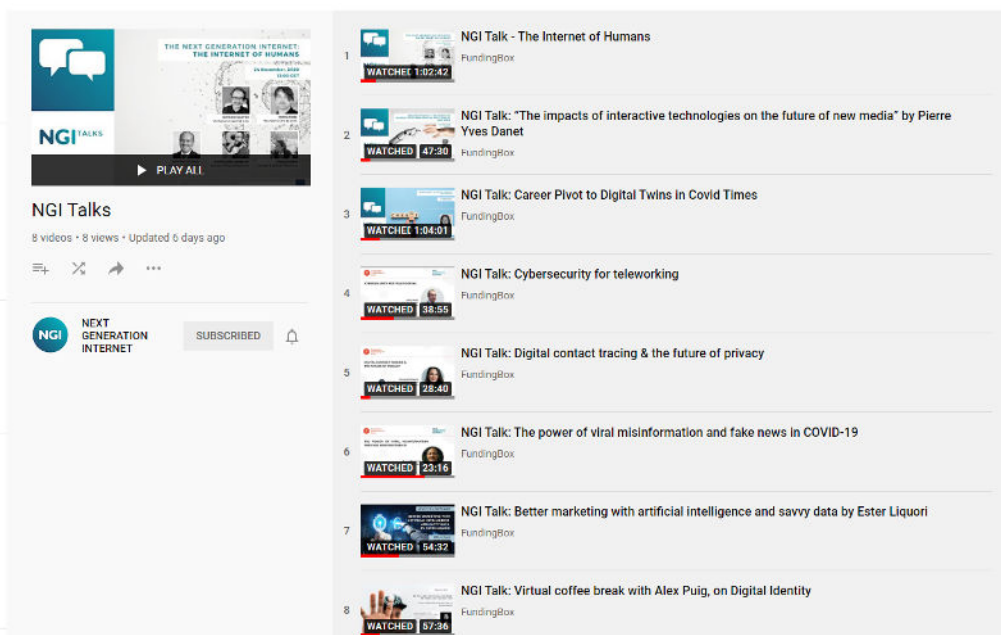- The FundingBox YouTube "NGI Talks" Playlist & the NGI YouTube Channel "NGI Talks" Playlist.

FIGURE 23: NGI TALKS PLAYLIST AT NGI YOUTUBE ACCOUNT

Since the start of the NGI Talks at the beginning of 2020:

- **8 NGI Talks** have taken place, and all of them are available at the NGI Talks Collection at the NGI Community.

- These Talks have been **viewed/attended by 849 people** (data 16.12.2020)

- The **main topics** discussed have been digital identity, cybersecurity and privacy, among others.

Hereunder there is the list with the topics, dates and Ambassadors that organised the webinars:

Ambassador	Topic	Date
Alex Puig	Do you have everything you need to prove that you are you?	23.01.2020
Ester Liquori	Better marketing with savvy data by Ester Liquori	29.04.2020
Aljosa Pasic	Cybersecurity for teleworking	25.06.2020*
Daveed Benjamin	The power of viral misinformation and fake news in COVID-19	25.06.2020*
Manuela Battaglini	Digital contact tracing & the future of privacy	25.06.2020*
Sudha Jampthe	Career Pivot to Digital Twins in Covid Times	15.09.2020
Pierre-Yves Danet	The impacts of interactive technologies on the future of new media	22.10.2020
Antonio Grasso	The Next Generation Internet: Internet of HUMANS Round table with the participation of: • NGI Ambassador Antonio Grasso • Antonio Santos: Co-Founder of DT Lab, CxO Adviser on digital transformation, future of work, diversity and inclusion focused on sustainability • Mirko Ross: CEO of asvin.io, Cybersecurity Researcher, Speaker, DLT / Blockchain, Member of ENISA IoT, Security Expert Group • Kai Michael Hermsen: Global Coordinator for the Charter of Trust; Member of the Siemens Cybersecurity Board	24.11.2020

TABLE 4 : WEBINARS ORGANISED WITHIN THE "NGI TALKS" SERIES

*Organised within the _Funding Continuity Day_ already mentioned in Section 2.1.8.

• 4 more NGI Talks are currently being organised for the first months of 2021:

Ambassador	Topic	Date
Sam Butler	How is Digital Innovation Shaping the Post-Digital Era	14.01.2021
Manuela Battaglini	Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Society	28.01.2021
Eurid	"Cybersecurity for a safer Internet" Round table with the participation of: • NGI Ambassador Aljosa Pasic • Eurid Security Manager Dirk Jumpertz • Network security researcher engineer at SIDN Labs[8] Joao Ceron	February
Cibervolunteers Foundation	tbd	April

TABLE 5 : WEBINARS TO BE ORGANISED DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF 2021

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[8] https://www.sidnlabs.nl/en

Specific dissemination materials and posts/events are created for each Talk and shared in the NGI Community and NGI Social Media (see examples hereunder)
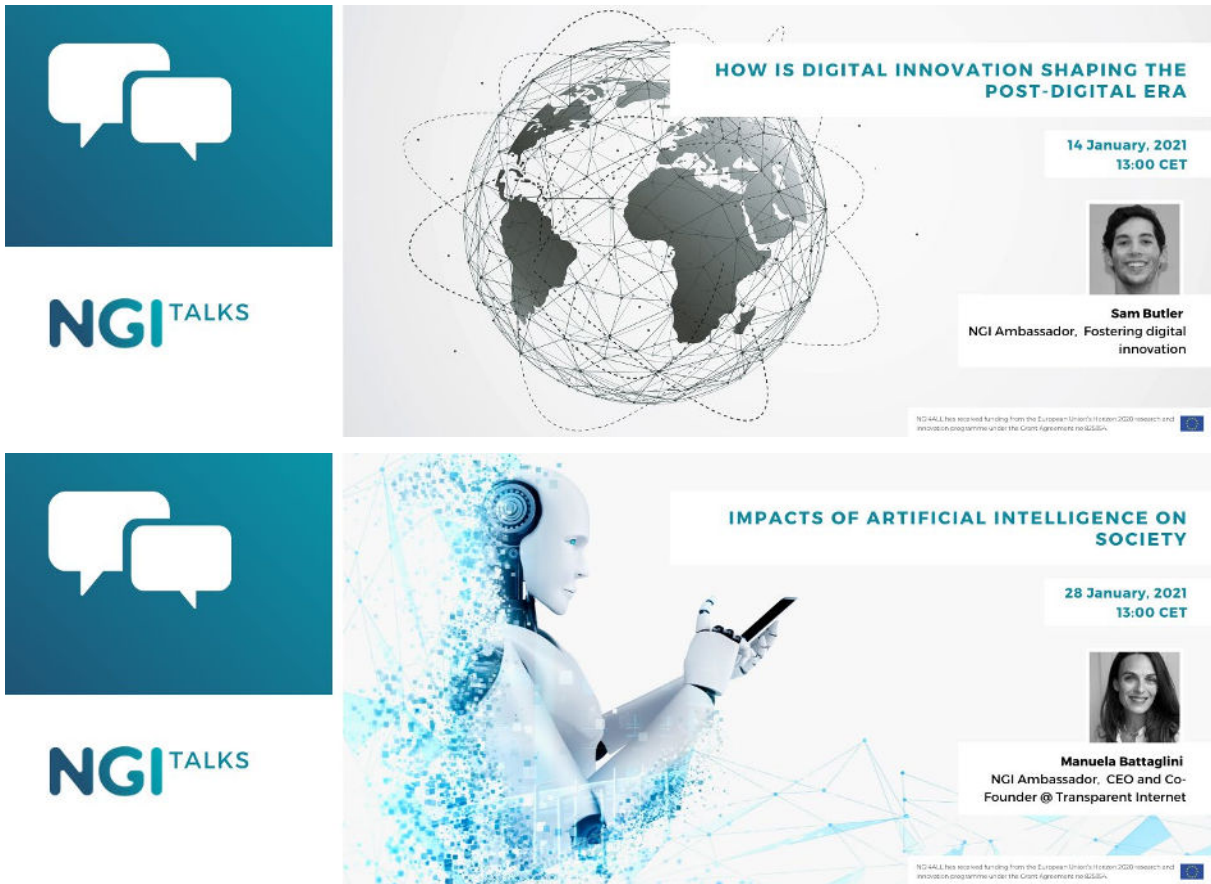

FIGURE 24: BANNERS OF NGI TALKS USED IN THE COMMUNITY, WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

4 CONCLUSIONS

The NGI Community Platform was officially launched with the aim to grow the NGI ecosystem, promote the NGI to newcomers, and to connect to a large community of outsiders interested in funding opportunities to help realising the human-centric vision of the internet of tomorrow.

To make it grow fast and be active and vibrant, it has been decided to implement a growth hacking strategy following the growth hacking funnel (acquisition, attraction, retention and referral), and at the same time integrating the inbound marketing methodology phases (attract, convert, close, delight), putting the focus on relevant content and exclusive activities such as webinars and Q&As to offer added value.

Several actions and campaigns have been carried out according to those methodologies. The actions from January – December 2020 have been explained in this document, and after deeply analysing them, we have detected some best practices and weaknesses.

4.1 Best Practices

To acquire users what works best is very direct actions with personalised messages for NGI different targets. In this sense, we have identified **email campaigns**, especially the targeted ones, and we expect that AdWords campaigns (Search and Display), once launched, to be the best performing activities.

Regarding content marketing, it is very positive to reinforce the presence on social media. Also, to get members to share content in the community, we have observed that the **NGI Talks and Q&A sessions** are very interesting and they are useful to create exclusive content, but also to acquire new members.

In general, the **Ambassadors Programme** has been very effective positioning the brand and the community, as well as creating content. For the implementation of this Programme, several good practices are also worth mentioning:

- Being flexible **when recruiting the ambassadors**. Keep in mind their time constraints, and adapting to the demands in format (posts or Q&As instead of webinars) or time frame.
- Use an **individual approach** to engage the most adequate people and profiles.

When onboarding new RIAs on the Community, it is very important to **devote enough time to explain the impact/benefits of the collaboration**. Using examples or previous success cases.

4.2 Weaknesses and Challenges

The main challenge when speaking about NGI Community is to engage the members and make them active. In order to increase engagement, spaces that foster discussion, sharing of experiences and best practices, along with moderation, will be implemented.

Also, a push to the Ambassadors Programme, with more engagement and activation actions of the confirmed ambassadors, will be done, including more regular Q&A / Webinar sessions.

In this phase of the project, it is time to pay **special attention to the engagement and retention** of the users, as this is key to make NGI Community Platform thrive. In order to overcome this challenge, several actions have been detailed in Section 2.8 Next Steps, such as:

- **Reinforced use of analytics** and data monitoring through the monthly follow-up on engagement rates, as well as through the features of the new release of the NGI Community platform

- Distribution of **surveys** to enhance the user's experience and increase engagement.

- **Leveraging actions** between social media and community.

Other challenges to pay attention to are the following:

- NGI4ALL will focus on **onboarding as many new RIAs as possible**, being proactive and when possible using any present connections we may have with the partners (common contacts, part of the partners' or Ambassadors networks, introduction through other RIAs already in the NGI Communities).

- And last, we are also very aware of the **need for a diverse and balanced group of ambassadors**, so we are paying special attention to relevant entities or people from the less represented countries (currently Spain, Italy and USA are overrepresented) and also to closing the gender gap.

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