



LIQUIDICE

Deliverable D5.5 – Connecting polar networks – 1st Report on networking activities

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Lead Author	Selvaggia Santin (CMCC)
Contributors	IG PAS, CNR-ISP
Contributing authors	Agata Goździk, Bartłomiej Luks, Warren Cairns, Agnieszka Kowalik
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Executive summary

This deliverable (D5.5) is the first of three periodic reports (D5.5–D5.7) documenting the clustering and networking activities carried out under Task 5.3 “Weaving connections: establishing, maintaining and raising polar networks” of Work Package 5 of LIQUIDICE. In line with the Grant Agreement, the report covers networking with relevant initiatives, projects and organisations, and reports on the activities of the project Advisory Board.

Over the first eighteen months, LIQUIDICE moved from establishing the structural foundations of its networking strategy to delivering concrete, multi-project collaboration. Foundational steps included joining the EU Polar Cluster, creating a dedicated networking section on the project website, and engaging in early coordination with the sister projects funded under the same Inland Ice call. These were followed by a decisive milestone at the EGU 2026 General Assembly, where a joint splinter meeting of the sister projects established cross-project DCE coordination and led directly to the formation of a standing inter-project communication group spanning ICELINK, CryoSCOPE, SnowPI and LIQUIDICE.

By Month 18, LIQUIDICE had a functioning, recurring communication channel with its sister projects, had exchanged dissemination, communication and exploitation strategy documents with them, and had initiated planning for joint webinars and a future joint policy-brief presentation to policymakers in Brussels. In parallel, the project secured a physical presence at EU Polar Cluster booths through the European Polar Coordination Office, grew its LinkedIn network rapidly as a scientific-networking channel, and extended its reach through art–science partnerships around the Piccolo Orso opera. The Advisory Board had not yet been convened in the reporting period; its activities will be reported from D5.6 onwards.

1. Introduction and scope

1.1. Purpose of the deliverable

As defined in the Grant Agreement, D5.5 is the *“First report on clustering and networking activities with various initiatives, projects and organisations (T5.3), including reporting on the activities of the Advisory Board.”* It is a public (PU) report, led by Fondazione CMCC, due at Month 18 of the project.

This report therefore has two objects: (i) the networking and clustering work undertaken with external initiatives, projects and organisations; and (ii) the Advisory Board. It does not duplicate the communication and dissemination activities reported under D5.1 (M6) and D5.2, nor the DCE planning reported under D5.1–D5.3, although it references them where networking and communication overlap.

1.2. Context within WP5 and Task 5.3

WP5 ensures that LIQUIDICE delivers its expected impacts through two-way knowledge transfer, public outreach, stakeholder engagement, and project clustering via collaboration and cross-fertilisation between LIQUIDICE and other international and European research networks and projects. Within WP5, Task 5.3 is dedicated specifically to establishing, maintaining and raising polar networks, building interaction between LIQUIDICE and stakeholders through direct engagement with existing networks and organisations rather than over-extending the project’s own direct-engagement capacity.

The Grant Agreement identifies a broad target landscape for this task, including the Year of Polar Prediction (YOPP), IPY and ICARP IV; the European Polar Board, IASC, SCOR and Arctic Hub; the ESA Polar Science Cluster and the EU Arctic/Polar Cluster via EU PolarNet; the Arctic GEOSS; the GEO initiative; relevant actions under HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE and HORIZON-CL6-2024-ZEROPOLLUTION; and, in particular, the projects funded under the same topic as LIQUIDICE. This first reporting period concentrated on the latter — the sister projects — and on entry into the EU Polar Cluster, which together provided the fastest route to tangible cross-project collaboration.

1.3. Reporting period and method

The reporting period runs from the project start (1 February 2025) to Month 18. Evidence for this report is drawn from project coordination records, the project website, EU Polar Cluster communications, and the correspondence and meetings of the sister-projects communication group. Networking activities are logged against the categories used by WP5 (cluster engagement, conference and splinter meetings, inter-project communication, tools/services, and online presence).

2. Networking approach

LIQUIDICE pursues networking on the principle set out in Task 5.3: maximise impact by plugging into existing, well-established networks and the cohort of thematically adjacent projects, rather than building parallel structures. In practice this translated into three complementary lines of action during the reporting period:

- **Vertical integration into the EU Polar Cluster**, giving LIQUIDICE visibility within the established European polar research community and a ready-made dissemination amplifier.
- **Horizontal clustering with the sister projects** funded under the same Inland Ice call (ICELINK, CryoSCOPE, SnowPI), where shared scientific scope and aligned timelines make joint DCE activity efficient and mutually reinforcing.
- **Standing online presence**, through a dedicated networking section on the project website that publicly documents these connections and keeps them discoverable.

This approach is deliberately incremental: foundations were laid in 2025, and the EGU 2026 splinter meeting acted as the catalyst that converted contacts into a functioning collaboration structure.

3. Networking activities in the reporting period

3.4. Engagement with the EU Polar Cluster

LIQUIDICE joined and engaged with the EU Polar Cluster early in the project. The project was included in the EU Polar Cluster Spring 2025 newsletter, and the WP5 team amplified cluster communications through the project's own channels. Membership of the cluster provides LIQUIDICE with a direct line to the wider European polar research landscape referenced in Task 5.3 and a standing mechanism for joint visibility.

This engagement deepened into concrete physical presence during the reporting period. Through the European Polar Coordination Office (EPCO), LIQUIDICE arranged for its outreach materials — approximately 45 project button badges with polar photography, the LIQUIDICE logo and website together with printed infosheets — to be displayed on the project's behalf at EU Polar Cluster booths at up to two events later in 2026. This allows the project to participate “virtually” in cluster events it does not attend in person, extending its reach at minimal cost and carbon footprint, in line with the WP5 objectives.

Note on the three polar bodies. For clarity, three distinct but related entities are referenced in this report. The **European Polar Board (EPB)** is the independent pan-European organisation of polar research and operations institutions, providing strategic advice on polar science. The **European Polar Coordination Office (EPCO)**, hosted at Umeå University, is the EPB's coordination and support office. The **EU Polar Cluster** is the network of EU-funded polar research projects and related bodies, coordinated with the support of the EPB/EPCO, through which LIQUIDICE pursues joint visibility and shared outreach.

3.5. Project website: networking and sister-projects section

A dedicated “Networking” section was added to the project website's About page in May 2025, publicly presenting LIQUIDICE's sister and cluster projects with links. This established a durable, public-facing dissemination asset that keeps the project's connections visible to external audiences and is maintained as the network grows.

3.6. Early coordination with sister projects (2025)

During 2025, the project coordination engaged with the sister projects under the Inland Ice call. At that stage the projects opted not to set up a formal joint communication team, preferring first to understand what each project could offer and expect from the others. LIQUIDICE contributed a concise position note outlining its proposed offers and expectations, which the coordinator carried into the cross-project coordination dialogue. This groundwork prepared the ground for the formal collaboration established in 2026.

3.7. EGU 2026 joint splinter meeting

A decisive milestone was the joint splinter meeting of the Inland Ice sister projects held during the EGU 2026 General Assembly on 6 May: a lunchtime session (12:45–13:45) and an afternoon session (15:15–18:00). The discussions focused on strengthening collaboration across the four projects and identifying concrete opportunities for joint activities.

Key areas of collaboration include the exchange of datasets, supported through the sharing of data catalogues to facilitate the archiving and accessibility of project data. The projects also agreed to increase mutual participation in webinars, workshops, and meetings, thereby enhancing knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement. In addition, the partners expressed their intention to coordinate their final dissemination activities in Brussels towards the end of the projects, with the aim of increasing visibility and impact through a joint presence.

The meetings also highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration among modelling teams to promote the exchange of expertise and methodologies. A further central topic was the coordination of dissemination, communication, and exploitation activities across the projects. As an immediate follow-up action, the communication contacts from all four projects were compiled and circulated, establishing the personal network that subsequently formed the basis of the inter-project communication group.

3.8. Formation of the joint sister-projects communication group

Following EGU, the communication contacts of ICELINK, CryoSCOPE, SnowPI and LIQUIDICE were formally exchanged, constituting a standing inter-project communication group. The group's remit is to coordinate joint DCE activities, share approaches and materials, and pursue shared outputs such as joint webinars — an idea that emerged directly from the splinter-meeting discussions.

3.9. First joint communication-teams meeting (29 May 2026)

The communication group held its first online meeting on 29 May 2026. The agenda comprised a round-table introduction of the communication staff of each project followed by a short presentation (up to five minutes per project) of each project's dissemination and communication activities, ensuring a shared baseline for those who had not attended the EGU splinter meeting. The meeting confirmed the group as a recurring channel and set in motion the mutual exchange of strategy documents.

3.10. Exchange of DCE strategy and exploitation materials

In connection with the first meeting, the projects exchanged core DCE documents. LIQUIDICE shared its DCE plan with the group, while ICELINK shared the first versions of its Communications & Dissemination strategy and its Exploitation Plan. This mutual sharing supports cross-fertilisation of communication and exploitation approaches across the cohort and avoids duplicated effort. The group also noted the value of the EC Horizon Results Booster services — in particular the dissemination service — as a shared route for strengthening uptake.

3.11. Internal coordination supporting networking

Networking outputs were grounded in regular internal WP5 coordination, which from early 2026 settled into a recurring monthly meeting. A WP5 coordination meeting in March 2026 reviewed contacts gathered at recent Arctic forum and General Assembly events and set priorities for pilot-level outreach across the project's super-sites (Italian Alps, Norway, Greenland, Svalbard and the Indian Himalayas). A subsequent WP5 meeting on 20 May 2026 consolidated the EGU follow-up, confirmed the joint-webinar plan with the sister projects, and reviewed progress against WP5 KPIs: most dissemination, communication and networking KPIs were found to be on track, with two requiring closer attention (the four planned 360-degree super-site videos and the six planned stakeholder events), for which remedial actions were agreed. This connects external networking directly to the needs of each pilot and to the project's impact targets.

3.12. Digital networking via LinkedIn

LinkedIn was identified by the WP5 team as the project's most valuable channel for its scientific-networking objectives. The project operates a LinkedIn presence (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/liquidice/>) with several content administrators across partners (CMCC, CNR-ISP, IG PAS), who grow the network by inviting relevant polar and climate contacts and by interacting with the content of adjacent initiatives and sister projects. During a two-month period in spring 2026 the follower base grew by approximately 350%, providing a fast-expanding, low-cost channel for connecting LIQUIDICE with the wider research and stakeholder community.

3.13. Art–science outreach: the Piccolo Orso opera

As an unconventional networking and outreach vehicle, the project's associated opera Piccolo Orso e la Montagna di Ghiaccio — which dramatises the melting of an ice mountain and the role of pollution and black carbon — continued to build connections with cultural institutions. During the reporting period it was presented in Granada (Spain), with further performances planned in several Italian cities and interest expressed from Finland in acquiring performance rights. Contacts were also pursued with opera houses in Poland. These cultural partnerships extend LIQUIDICE's reach to audiences beyond the scientific community and create durable institutional connections.

3.14. Positioning within the cryosphere community: COP30 Open Letter

LIQUIDICE engaged with the wider cryosphere research community around the Cryosphere Open Letter released as COP30 opened, which reached the project through cross-community

networks. The project shared the letter internally and within its community and considered signing it at project level, illustrating the two-way information flow between LIQUIDICE and the broader polar and climate networks that Task 5.3 is designed to cultivate.

3.15. Mobilisation of associations, platforms and European networks

In parallel with the project-to-project networking described in preceding sections, LIQUIDICE has begun mapping the wider landscape of European associations, thematic platforms and policy-driven networks relevant to its scientific scope and stakeholder engagement strategy. This work draws directly on the recommendations of the EC Horizon Results Booster Dissemination Support service (Service 2.1, Final Report, 24 February 2026), which identified mobilisation of associations and networks as one of the areas with the greatest potential to lift the project's reach beyond the current scientific community.

The Booster assessment identified the following platforms and networks as priority targets for LIQUIDICE to join or engage with, on the grounds of thematic alignment with the project's objectives in water resources, cryosphere change, climate adaptation, and citizen engagement:

- **EU Mission Adaptation Community** (Futurium platform): a European Commission-hosted community for knowledge sharing and collaboration on climate resilience, connecting projects, regions and stakeholders working towards adaptation by 2030. Its policy-facing character and cross-sectoral reach make it a natural amplifier for LIQUIDICE's KERs on water resources and socio-economic adaptation.
- **Climate Alliance Working Group on Adaptation**: a working group bringing together climate experts and political leaders from member municipalities and partner organisations. Engagement here would connect LIQUIDICE research outputs to sub-national and local governance actors, exactly the regional-level policymakers and local politicians identified as high-priority stakeholders in the Booster's stakeholder mapping.
- **European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Water Working Group**: the EEB's dedicated water group focuses on European water legislation (including the Water Framework Directive) and networks national and local environmental organisations. Membership or participation would anchor LIQUIDICE in European civil-society water-policy dialogue.
- **Water Europe**: a Brussels-based European technology and innovation platform for water, offering policy dialogue, thematic working groups and dissemination channels. Engagement would align LIQUIDICE with EU-level water innovation communities and give the project visibility in a constituency that overlaps directly with KER#3 (snow-water-equivalent datasets) and KER#10–11 (water discharge impact and policy recommendations).
- **Policy-driven event forums**: the Booster explicitly recommended ensuring LIQUIDICE presence at the EU Green Week, World Water Day policy conferences, and relevant UN climate and water events, where presenting project insights can influence regulatory and funding agendas.

These engagements are in the planning phase. The WP5 team will prioritise entry points that require the lowest additional resources, in particular platforms that allow engagement on the basis of mutual visibility without financial contribution, and will report on progress in D5.6.

4. Summary of networking activities

4.16. Log of activities

The table below summarises the networking and clustering activities undertaken in the reporting period.

Date	Type	Activity / counterpart	Outcome
Apr 2025	Cluster	EU Polar Cluster – membership & newsletter (Spring 2025 issue)	LIQUIDICE featured among cluster projects; circulated internally and amplified on project social media
May 2025	Web	Networking section added to project website (About page)	Public listing of sister/cluster projects established as a standing dissemination asset
Jun 2025	Cluster	Sister-projects coordination (Inland Ice call) – position note on offers & expectations	LIQUIDICE input fed by coordinator into cross-project coordination dialogue
Jul 2025	Tools	EC Horizon Results Booster – application for personalised support	Dissemination service pathway opened for future joint uptake
Feb–Mar 2026	Internal	WP5 coordination meeting (9 Mar 2026) reviewing contacts from Arctic forum & GA events	Pilot-level outreach priorities set across super-sites
May 2026	Conference	EGU 2026 joint splinter meeting of Inland Ice sister projects	DCE coordination agreed; communication contacts exchanged across the four projects
May 2026	Cluster	Formation of the joint sister-projects communication group (ICELINK, CryoSCOPE, SnowPI, LIQUIDICE)	Standing inter-project communication channel established
29 May 2026	Meeting	1st joint communication-teams meeting (online)	Round-table of teams; 5-min DCE presentation per project; agreement to exchange strategy documents
May 2026	Exchange	Mutual sharing of DCE materials (LIQUIDICE DCE plan; ICELINK C&D strategy and Exploitation Plan)	Cross-fertilisation of strategy and exploitation approaches; joint-webinar concept initiated

May 2026	Cluster	EPCO – LIQUIDICE badges (~45) and infosheets supplied for EU Polar Cluster booths	Physical project presence secured at up to two cluster events in 2026 without in-person attendance
Spring 2026	Digital	LinkedIn networking via multi-partner admin team	~350% follower growth over two months; sister-project and initiative cross-interaction
2025–2026	Art–science	Piccolo Orso opera presented in Granada; further Italian cities and Finland interest	Cultural-institution connections extending reach beyond the scientific community
Nov 2025	Community	COP30 Cryosphere Open Letter – shared and considered for project-level signature	Two-way engagement with the wider cryosphere community
Feb 2026	Networks	EC Horizon Results Booster (Service 2.1) – dissemination readiness assessment completed	Priority networks for engagement identified: EU Mission Adaptation Community, Climate Alliance, EEB Water WG, Water Europe, EU Green Week
Apr 2026	Network	Presentation of LIQUIDICE at the semi-annual network meeting of Climate Research Communication Network	Exchange of information and good practices with other European projects with climate research communication compound

Table: Log of networking activities

4.17. Mapped sister and cluster projects

The following table records the projects and networks with which LIQUIDICE established connections during the reporting period, together with the basis and focus of each connection.

Project	Lead / contact	Basis & focus of connection
ICELINK	University of Copenhagen / Univ. of Iceland	North Atlantic land ice linking Iceland and Greenland; shared C&D strategy and exploitation planning
CryoSCOPE	FMI	Cryosphere–Atmosphere–Hydrosphere coupled processes across Alps, Svalbard, Himalayas, Iceland, Lapland
SnowPI	Arctik / NORCE	Snow processes and prediction; communication-team collaboration
EU Polar Cluster	polarcluster.eu / EPCO	Umbrella networking, joint visibility, newsletter dissemination and physical booth presence
EU Mission Adaptation	European Commission	Climate resilience and adaptation community; connects LIQUIDICE to cross-

Community (Futurium)		sectoral EU stakeholders; relevant to KER#10–11 and socio-economic adaptation outputs
Climate Alliance – Adaptation WG	Climate Alliance member municipalities	Sub-national and local governance actors; direct link to regional policymakers and local politicians identified in stakeholder mapping
European Environmental Bureau – Water WG	EEB, Brussels	EU water legislation and civil-society networks; relevant to water-resources KERs and citizen engagement outputs

Table: Mapped sister and cluster projects

5. Advisory Board

The Grant Agreement specifies that D5.5–D5.7 also report on the activities of the Advisory Board. During this first reporting period (to Month 18) the Advisory Board was established consisting of:

- Christine Schøtt Hvidberg, University of Copenhagen – PI of ICELINK (sister project)
- Rakesh Hooda, Finnish Meteorological Institute – PI of CryoSCOPE (sister project)
- Carlo Barbante, Ca' Foscari University
- Martin Wearing, European Space Agency – ESA Point of Contact for LIQUIDICE

The Advisory Board has not yet been convened, as no need to do so has arisen during the reporting period. The project has progressed according to plan, and no issues or strategic decisions requiring the Board's involvement have been identified so far. The activities of the Advisory Board will be reported in the next periodic networking report, D5.6 (Month 36).

6. Conclusions and next steps

In its first eighteen months LIQUIDICE established the foundations of its polar-networking strategy and, decisively, converted them into an operating collaboration. The project is an active member of the EU Polar Cluster, with a physical presence at cluster booths secured via EPCO, maintains a public networking presence on its website and a fast-growing LinkedIn network, and is part of a functioning, recurring communication group with its three sister projects, with strategy and exploitation materials already being shared and joint webinars in planning.

Planned next steps under Task 5.3 include: consolidating the **joint-webinar** series with the sister projects; preparing a joint presentation of policy briefs from three of the sister projects to policymakers in Brussels, with the **Arctic Futures Symposium** (autumn 2028) identified as a candidate venue and early contact with the International Polar Foundation (IPF) envisaged to secure a slot; broadening engagement towards the wider networks named in the Grant Agreement (e.g. the European Polar Board, IASC, the ESA Polar Science Cluster, YOPP/ICARP IV); activating **engagement with the European associations and thematic platforms** identified through the Horizon Results Booster service (EU Mission Adaptation Community, Climate Alliance Adaptation Working Group, the European Environmental Bureau Water Working

Group, Water Europe, and policy forums such as EU Green Week and World Water Day); deepening pilot-level outreach across the five super-sites, including the stakeholder meetings in preparation in Greenland and Italy; continuing to grow the project's LinkedIn network as a primary scientific-networking channel; pursuing the EC Horizon Results Booster dissemination service collaboratively; and convening the Advisory Board. These developments will be reported in D5.6.