



NETWORKS

# Consultation Framework Delivery Plan

NATIONAL NETWORK,  
LOCAL CONNECTIONS  
PROGRAMME

DOC-230921-GYP

Updated following consultation in Q4 2021



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# Glossary

# 1 GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
DSO	Distribution System Operator
DSR	Demand Side Response
RESS-1	Renewable Electricity Support Scheme 1
SEM	Single Electricity Market
TSO	Transmission System Operator

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# Overview

## 2 OVERVIEW

### THE KEY OBJECTIVE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

To ensure that the National Network, Local Connections Programme enables all electricity customers and communities to play an active role in climate action, we need to listen and respect varying opinions and insights, we need to be transparent and communicative in how we deliver the programme. We must share knowledge in an open and timely manner. We need to engage and collaborate with customers, communities, and industry.

Together with industry and policy makers, we will not leave anyone behind.

We cannot deliver the National Network, Local Connections Programme in isolation. In the initial stages of programme design, it was established that there will be a reliance on stakeholders across customers, communities, and industry. Policy makers' support and customers' participation will be central to delivering the National Network, Local Connections Programme.

By 2030, our ambition is that every home, farm, business, community, and industry group will have played a part in delivering the programme. To achieve this, our challenge is trifold:

- How do we ensure our stakeholders' views are reflected in the design and delivery of the programme?
- How do we engage in a timely, meaningful, and relevant way to ensure that we bring all stakeholders on this journey with us?
- How do we ensure that we are moving at a pace and delivering at a scale that is in line with industry and customer expectation and need?

These challenges are interlinked, and an insight-led approach to communication and engagement, informed by many stakeholders, will be required to address them.

In Q4, 2021 we consulted on the National Network, Local Connections Consultation Framework Approach. This document updates the consulted document based on the stakeholder feedback received, and shares how we propose to deliver on the framework approach.

## 2 OVERVIEW

In Q4 2021 we consulted on the Consultation Framework. In this document we set out:

- 1** Our stakeholders' initial perspectives, and how we are applying these insights.
- 2** Our proposals for engagement over the life of the programme, (in an insight driven way).
- 3** The proposed role of consultation and communications in supporting piloting and making National Network, Local Connections more tangible for customers and communities.
- 4** How we propose to deliver at the pace and scale of the programme.

### STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON THE CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL

The stakeholder feedback received on the proposed Consultation Framework was broadly positive across different stakeholder groups. In total 58 items of feedback on this document were received. This feedback provided a rich insight into their perspectives and expectations regarding stakeholder engagement, consultation, collaboration and communications. The key themes emerging, and a detailed breakdown of the feedback received are available in the ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme Consultation Response Paper and the ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme Consultation Response Paper Appendix'. (both of which can be found on the website here: <https://www.esbnetworks.ie/who-we-are/national-network-local-connections-programme/our-consultations>). Feedback received was carefully reviewed by the National Network, Local Connections team and subject matter experts across ESB Networks. Feedback which fell within the scope of the programme was considered in updating this Consultation Framework, which we are now adopting as the Consultation Framework Delivery Plan.

### STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK - CLARIFICATIONS

- We plan to build on the engagement and collaboration initiated in 2021, as we move forward with the design and implementation of the programme. The engagement and consultation in 2021 are just the beginning of what we intend to be a dynamic and collaborative process over the life of the Programme.
- Lessons learned and outcomes from the pilots will be shared with stakeholders and are a key part of the development of long-term proposals for flexibility. Pilot learnings will provide rich insights for all stakeholders, and we are strongly of the view that sharing these lessons is critical to the success of the Programme.

## 2 OVERVIEW

### STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK - KEY ACTIONS

Based on the rich insights shared by our stakeholders, we are proposing the following updates to our Consultation Framework Approach.

- We are proposing the introduction of a National Network, Local Connections 'Consultative Stakeholder Group', for which terms of reference and ways of working will be proposed in early 2022. The Consultative Stakeholder Group will play a central role in engagement, collaboration and supporting stakeholders' ability to plan for and influence the timing of consultations in future.
- As set out in the ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme Consultation Response Paper and the ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme Piloting Roadmap' (both of which can be found on the website here: <https://www.esbnetworks.ie/who-we-are/national-network-local-connections-programme/our-consultations>) we will adapt the piloting roadmap, broadening the potential for engagement and participation, including by undertaking the definition of a Agile Customer/Community Pilot available to energy communities nationwide which seek to participate. Pending its progress-pause-or-adapt decision, this could involve the provision of local electricity system dashboards and measuring the behavioural impact of different approaches to driving awareness through the dashboards as per 'ESB Networks National-Network Local Connections Programme Visibility Data Platforms Dashboards' (which can be found on the website here: <https://www.esbnetworks.ie/who-we-are/national-network-local-connections-programme/our-consultations>)
- We will seek to engage in an open and collaborative manner with stakeholders seeking to development of viable propositions for delivering the flexibility products and services proposed at distribution level, including for example aggregators, energy services companies and suppliers. Having set out a preliminary suite of candidate products in ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme Phased Flexibility Market Development Plan' (which can be found on the website here: <https://www.esbnetworks.ie/who-we-are/national-network-local-connections-programme/our-consultations>) our next steps are to work with the competitive market participants who we hope and expect will recruit customers to deliver these services, to support their development of viable propositions, and apply what is learned in this way, to inform the future development of the products themselves.

**Thank you to all the stakeholders who shared their insights on the Consultation Framework Document and contributed to the Consultation Framework Delivery Plan.**



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# Consultation Framework Delivery Plan

### 3 CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK DELIVERY PLAN

#### 3.1 ADVOCATING FOR OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The Consultation Framework Delivery Plan will work to ensure that stakeholders can advocate for themselves in the design and delivery of the programme. It will support project delivery and the adoption of new propositions. It will support our organisation's ability, along with industry's, customers' and communities' ability to prepare for the change that the National Network, Local Connections Programme will bring into homes, farms, businesses, communities, and industries.

We have learned from engagement from stakeholders throughout the initial phase of the programme and key insights from the consultation of Q4, 2021 are now informing our next steps. Key insights:

<p>It's not just about consultation – it's about insight driven communications in advance of engagement and then followed by relevant consultation.</p>	<p>It's about putting the stakeholder in the centre of our programme management meetings and having a resource to advocate for them</p>	<h3>Listening!</h3> <p>If there has been one lesson, we have learned so far on this programme it is that we need to listen to understand, from stakeholders, academia, global utilities and how powerful this can be in supporting the rollout of the National Network, Local Connections Programme.</p>
<p>It's about continuing to monitor, engage and listen to our stakeholders.</p>	<p>It's about thinking 'what is best for stakeholders' not what is the path of least resistance for the programme.</p>	
<p>It's about journey mapping on behalf of our stakeholders across every segment to ensure we really understand their perspective.</p>	<p>It's about getting customers involved early.</p>	
<p>It's about collaboration and working partnership with industry.</p>		

### 3 CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK DELIVERY PLAN

#### 3.2 SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS TO SUPPORT PROGRAMME DELIVERY

There was strong support for the proposed pace and scale of the National Network, Local Connections Programme across all the round table meetings and in the formal responses received through public consultation. Stakeholders acknowledged that the proposed pace and scale is ambitious but there was agreement that this is required and is achievable. However, it was also identified that charting the best course to deliver to the mandated pace and scale will rely on our consultation framework and how it is delivered.

Through the consultation framework, we will work in collaboration with stakeholders across all segments, including industry, customers, communities. The Consultation Framework Delivery Plan will deliver an insight-led approach to stakeholder collaboration, delivered under the following four headings:



**Secure Equable  
Stakeholder Representation**



**Capture Stakeholder  
Insights and Apply them into  
Programme Design & Delivery**



**Work in Collaboration with  
Stakeholders to Deliver**



**Build Awareness,  
Education & Engagement**

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# Secure Equitable Stakeholder Representation

## 4 SECURE EQUITABLE STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

To secure equitable stakeholder representation, we must be clear on who our stakeholders are, who of our stakeholders we are already engaging with, who we need to reach out to, and how we will grow the map of stakeholders who are engaged in the programme.

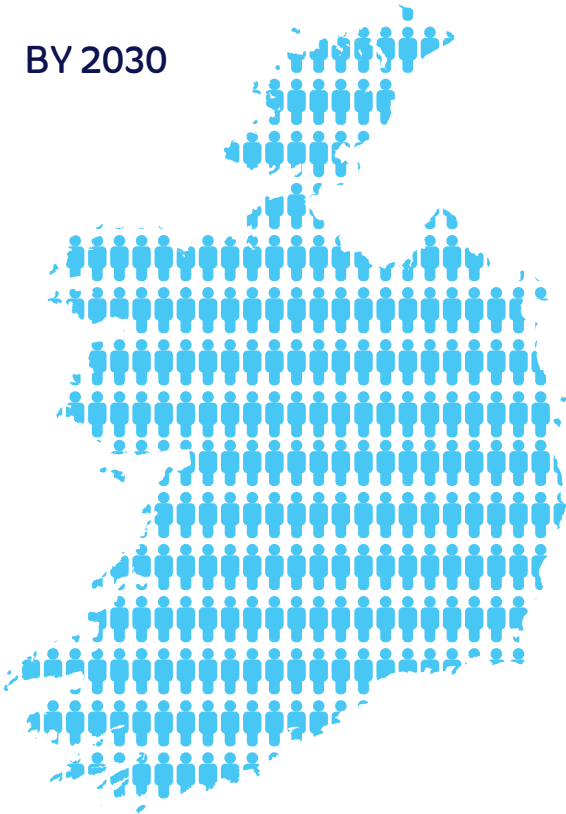
### 4.1 WHO ARE OUR STAKEHOLDERS?

By 2030 we plan to reach every Irish home, farm, community and business which is using electricity or participating in the electricity industry today.

It is today's 17-year-olds who in 10 years' time will have a home. It is today's fledgling businesses in innovation hubs across Ireland who in 10 years' time will demand secure, affordable and sustainable energy. Every home, every farm, every business we serve today will have a role to play over this decade.

Our stakeholder map is extensive; every person in Ireland should have the opportunity to participate. However, based on the communications and consultation approaches adopted in other Irish and international transformational programmes, we understand that engaging everyone at this early stage would be counterproductive. This is a complex proposition, and people need the opportunity to come on a journey. As such, we will build awareness, education, & engagement in a timely and relevant way.

BY 2030



## 4 SECURE EQUITABLE STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

### 4.2 WHO ARE WE CURRENTLY ENGAGING WITH?

We established a stakeholder map in phase 1 of the programme. This is now a living document; it is constantly updated as people register their interest in the programme.

In September 2021, before the public launch of the programme, 186 stakeholders across 6 segments were registered on our stakeholder map. The 6 segments were:

- 1 Partners
- 2 Generation
- 3 Demand (suppliers and aggregators)
- 4 Technology (design, development, manufacturing and supply)
- 5 Communities (homes, farms, and business), and
- 6 Academia & International Peers

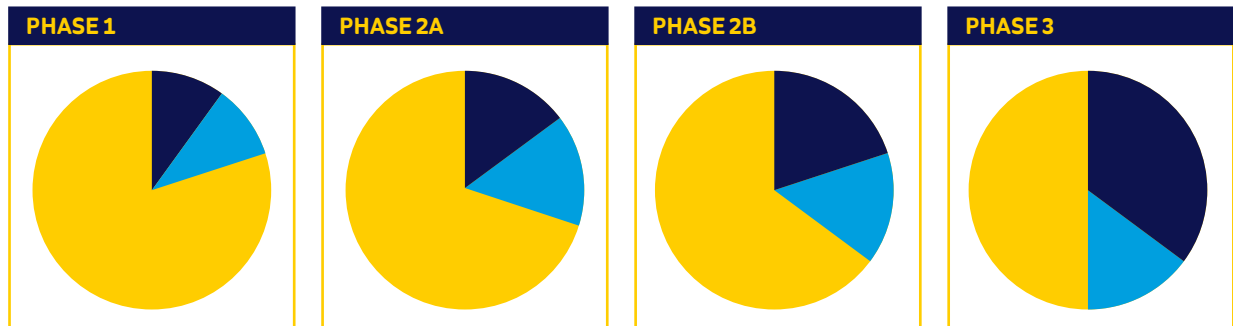
Since the programme was launched, we have reviewed and updated our stakeholder database, which has grown to 354 registered stakeholders (December 2021) coming from an increasingly diverse range of stakeholder segments.

## 4 SECURE EQUITABLE STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

### 4.3 HOW WE WILL GROW OUR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT?

As the programme evolves and matures, so will our key stakeholder groups. This means that it is important that the way we engage, communicate, build awareness, and educate adapt over time. To support this, we are targeting three levels of targeted stakeholder engagement, each mapped to specific communications, consultation, and engagement strategies.

TARGET STAKEHOLDERS FOR ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT (WHAT SHOULD STAKEHOLDERS EXPECT?)
Stakeholders on our Stakeholder List – these people are here because they want to be, they need to be, or they must be.	Active communication, actively encouraged and invited to participate in consultations and actively engaged with.
Targeted stakeholders to support this period of programme development.	Active target insights via research mix and their insights inform communication, actively encouraged, and invited to participate in consultations and we actively engage with them.
Everybody else – people who are unaware of the programme because it is not relevant...yet nor is it necessary for them to understand the programme...yet!	General awareness with opportunity to learn more by joining our stakeholder list.



● STAKEHOLDERS    ● TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS    ● EVERYBODY ELSE

Our stakeholder map is open to anyone seeking to engage with the programme. There are two routes to joining the National Network, Local Connection Programme stakeholder map

- 1 Self-registration using our online form which can be found on the programme webpage or by emailing [engagement@esbnetworks.ie](mailto:engagement@esbnetworks.ie)**
- 2 Programme team nomination of key people, companies, or groups to support the delivery of aspects of the Programme.**

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# Capture Stakeholder Insights & Apply Them Into Programme Design & Delivery



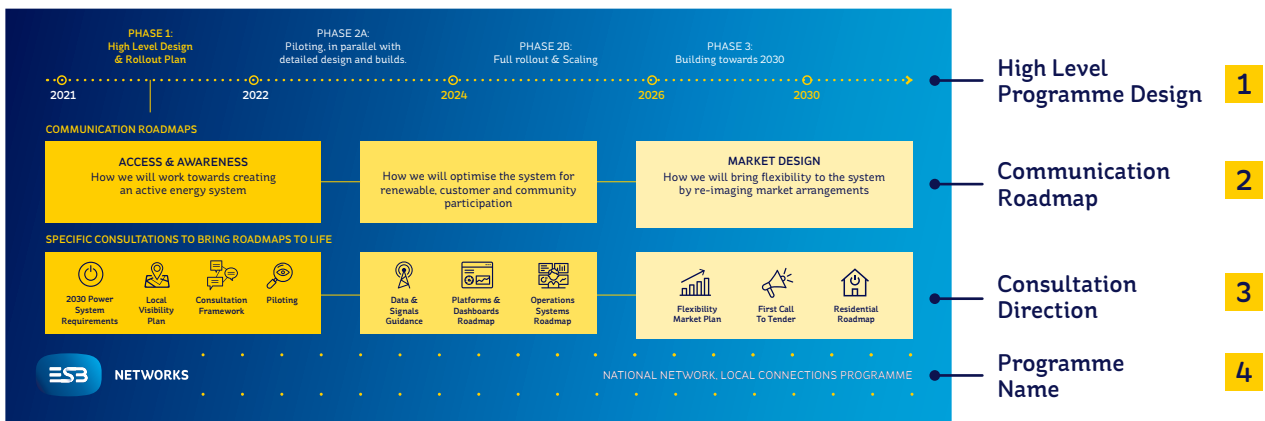
# 5 CAPTURE STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS & APPLY THEM INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN & DELIVERY

## 5.1 INSIGHT-LED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We are adopting an insight-led approach to stakeholder engagement in the National Network, Local Connections Programme. Between January to September 2021, we commissioned extensive quantitative and qualitative research across all stakeholder segments. We also took the opportunity to engage with our stakeholders at 26 events we were invited to participate in over this period. Through this engagement, 262+ insights and queries were registered on our insight log<sup>1</sup>.

## 5.2 IMPACT OF STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS TO DATE

Each insight gathered is mapped to a manager or workstream on the programme and considered in depth at management meetings and design forms. To date these insights have been used to inform many aspects of the programme, for example items 1-6 as illustrated.



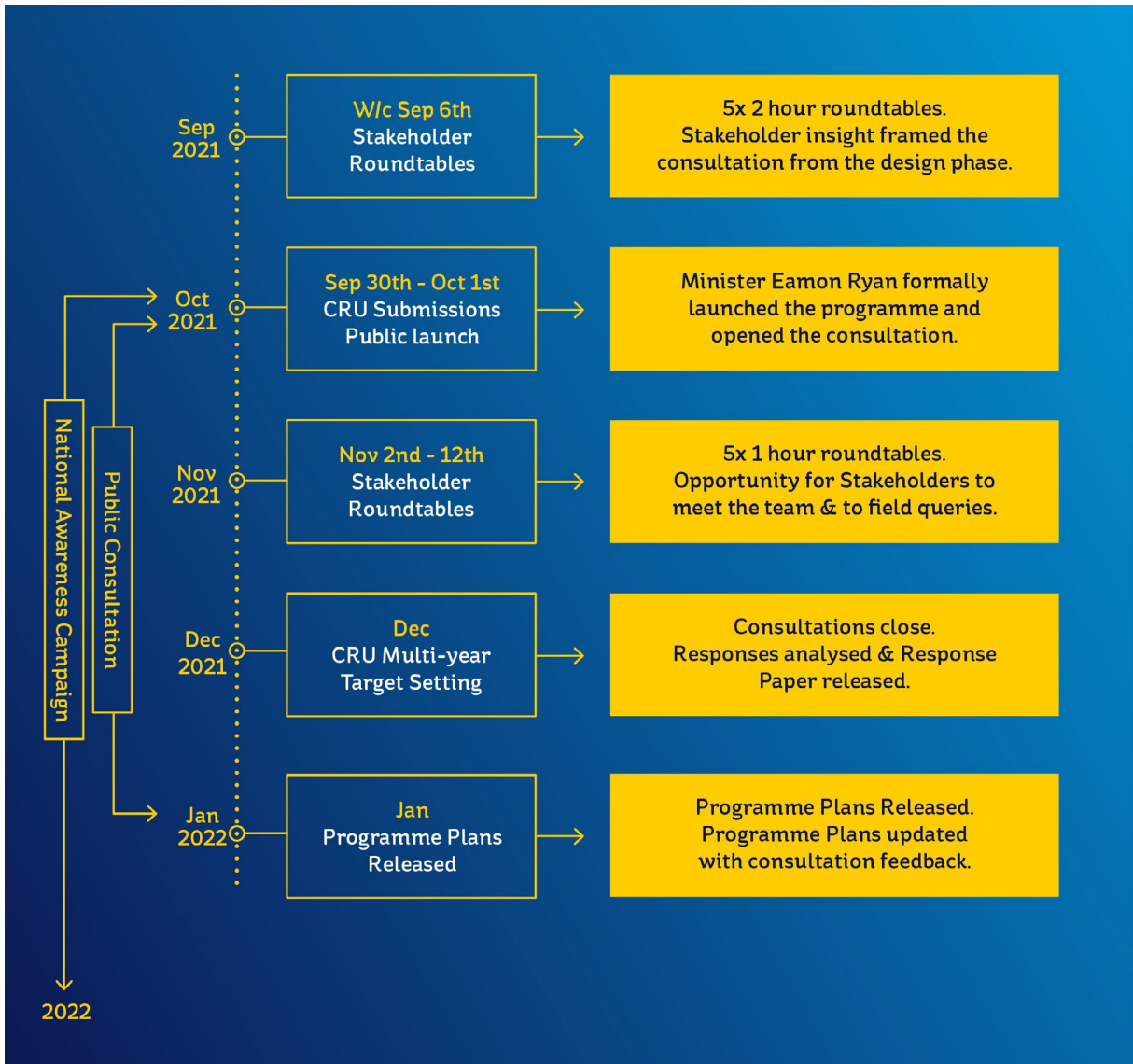
## AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



<sup>1</sup>Insight Log is an internal log which captures key queries, insights, and suggestions by stakeholders. This log is reviewed by the management team regularly and insights are mapped to deliverables or workstream leads to consider, and/or apply into design.

# 5 CAPTURE STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS & APPLY THEM INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN & DELIVERY

## CONSULTATION APPROACH



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## 5 CAPTURE STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS & APPLY THEM INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN & DELIVERY

### 5.3 ENHANCING OUR INSIGHT-LED APPROACH

Throughout the programme, we will continue to use research to learn, improve, and test our communications and consultation approaches. Early in Phase 2, we will seek to recruit an ‘insights’ workstream to work throughout the lifecycle of the programme. This workstream will seek to deliver a continuous stream of stakeholder insights, captured through qualitative and quantitative research and all touchpoints across the programme. We hope to share this, where relevant, with our stakeholders, in particular sharing and consulting on these insights with the Consultative Stakeholder Group<sup>1</sup>. Figure 2 illustrates the planned approach:

FIGURE 2 RESEARCH APPROACH



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# Work In Collaboration With Stakeholders To Deliver

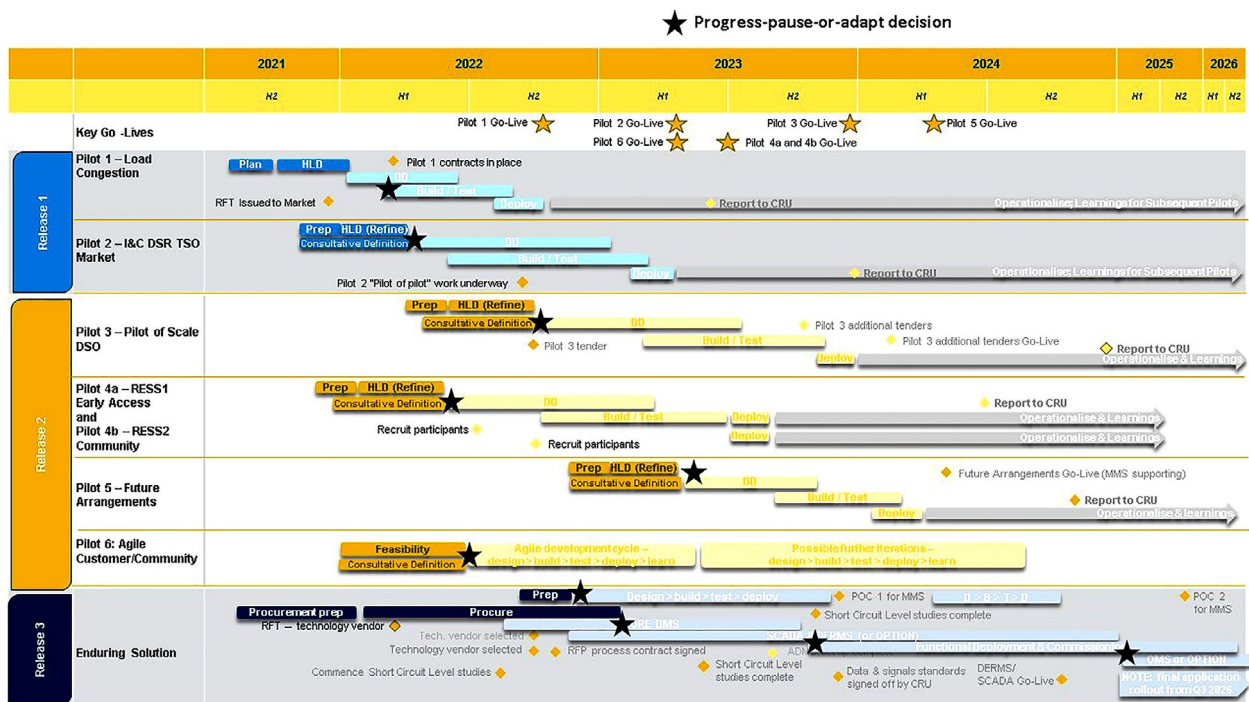
# 6 WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO DELIVER

## 6.1 PILOTING-RELATED ENGAGEMENT

### LEARNING AND SHARING THE LESSONS LEARNED

Piloting have a central role to play in how we engage with stakeholders. Over the 3 releases of the programme, each delivering greater maturity, we have proposed the definition of 6 pilots. Based on the consultation feedback received, we are proposing the definition of an additional customer, community driven pilot as illustrated in the Plan on the Page in Figure 3 below:

FIGURE 3 PLAN ON A PAGE FOR MULTIYEAR PLAN ROLLOUT



For each pilot, we will develop a communications and consultation plan based on the insight-led approach set out in the previous section, so we are communicating and engaging in a timely and relevant way. Each pilot will involve process and systems changes, but these will vary from pilot to pilot and depend on many factors including procurement processes, pilots locations, types of stakeholders and customer(s) involved. It will be important that we understand what stakeholders from across all segments would like to understand from each pilot, and to identify how we are building on the lessons learned from preceding pilots.

## 6 WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO DELIVER

### 6.2 SUPPORTING INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS & COMMUNITIES

As the programme matures and our organisation and industry develops, we hope to consider the role of partnership with other organisations to maximise reach, penetration and adoption within customers and communities. An ecosystem of aggregators, energy suppliers, energy services companies, and technology companies will be at the front line, developing new customer propositions to help customers change how and when they use electricity. We hope to support these developments, through awareness, education and or engagement initiatives. An example of this might involve a coordinated campaign, seeking to align communications from National Network, Local Connections Programme and industry where this can support the launch of new products or customer propositions.

### 6.3 CONSULTATIVE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

We are proposing the introduction of a National Network, Local Connections 'Consultative Stakeholder Group', for which terms of reference and ways of working will be proposed in early 2022. We hope that the Consultative Stakeholder Group will play a central role in engagement, collaboration and supporting stakeholders' ability to plan for and influence the timing of consultations in future. Equitable representation will be a key consideration when developing proposed terms of reference for the Consultative Stakeholder Group.

### 6.4 MAKING IT REAL FOR INDUSTRY, CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITIES

As the programme delivers on release 1, we plan to capture the lessons learned in a tangible format to make it real for stakeholders, so they can share in the pilot experience. Pending this first "make it real" experience, later in the programme (for example, in release 3), we hope to build on it by working with industry to deliver a tangible roadshow which shares the customer/community experience.

Making it real could be as simple as an awareness campaign or as complex as a piloting zones nationwide where propositions and services are tested. True to our insight-led approach, rather than specifying the right approach upfront, we plan to consider what is relevant, meaningful, and required at the relevant points in time.



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# Build Awareness, Education & Engagement

## 7 BUILD AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

### 7.1 BUILD AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

As the programme evolves over time and as the stakeholder representation grows and diversifies:

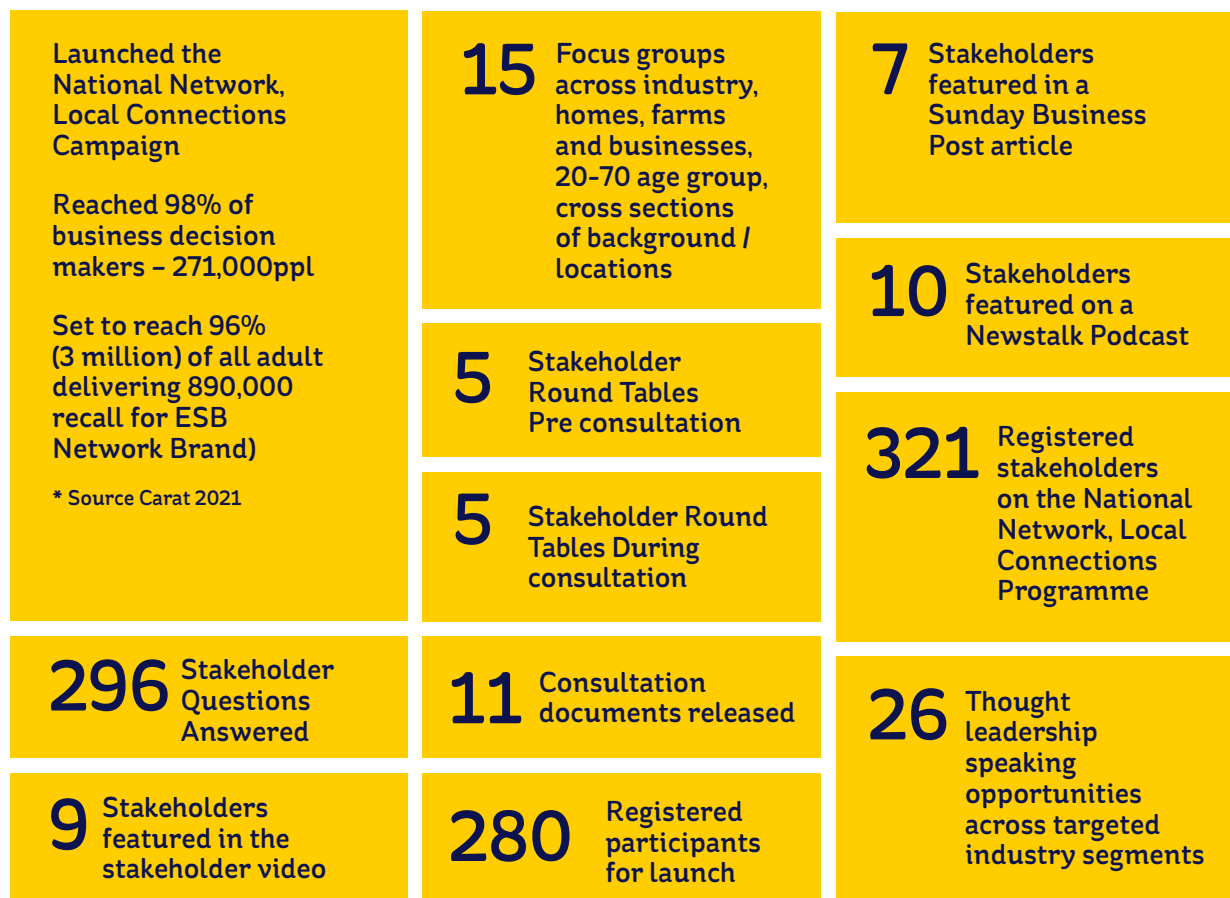
- 1** Existing stakeholders will continue to need awareness, education, and engagement, delivered in relevant and meaningful ways
- 2** It will be important to target stakeholders who are not yet aware of the programme and bring them on a meaningful journey of awareness, engagement, and education;

### 7.2 AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT – REFLECTING ON 2021

In 2021, we have actively recruited stakeholders representing industry, communities and business.

We have delivered a suite of activity to target industry, community representatives' groups and business professionals. Our objective was to ensure that crucial design decisions were influenced by stakeholders' voices. A suite of the activities delivered, ranging from thought leadership presentations through to a media campaign, are illustrated in Figure 4 below:

FIGURE 4 AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT DATA POINTS





# 7 BUILD AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

## IN 2021, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT COLLABORATION IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME

We have put our stakeholders front and centre of our awareness, engagement, and communication activity in 2021, because our stakeholders' voices, their perspectives and roles, are at the heart of making the objectives of the National Network, Local Connections programme a reality.



<p><b>2021 OFFICIAL LAUNCH</b></p> <p>Held virtually in September 2021 with Minister Eamon Ryan, and Marie Donnelly, Chair of the Climate Committee, 280 stakeholders registered for the event.</p> <p>The event featured our stakeholders in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• video to endorse the Programme,</li> <li>• panel discussion featuring stakeholders</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2021 NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN</b></p> <p>Featured stakeholders in sponsored content published in the Sunday Business Post and on a Newstalk podcast featuring our stakeholders.</p>	

## 7 BUILD AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

### 2021 CONSULTATION APPROACH

In 2021, our approach in delivering 11 consulted proposals was stakeholder led, as set out below:

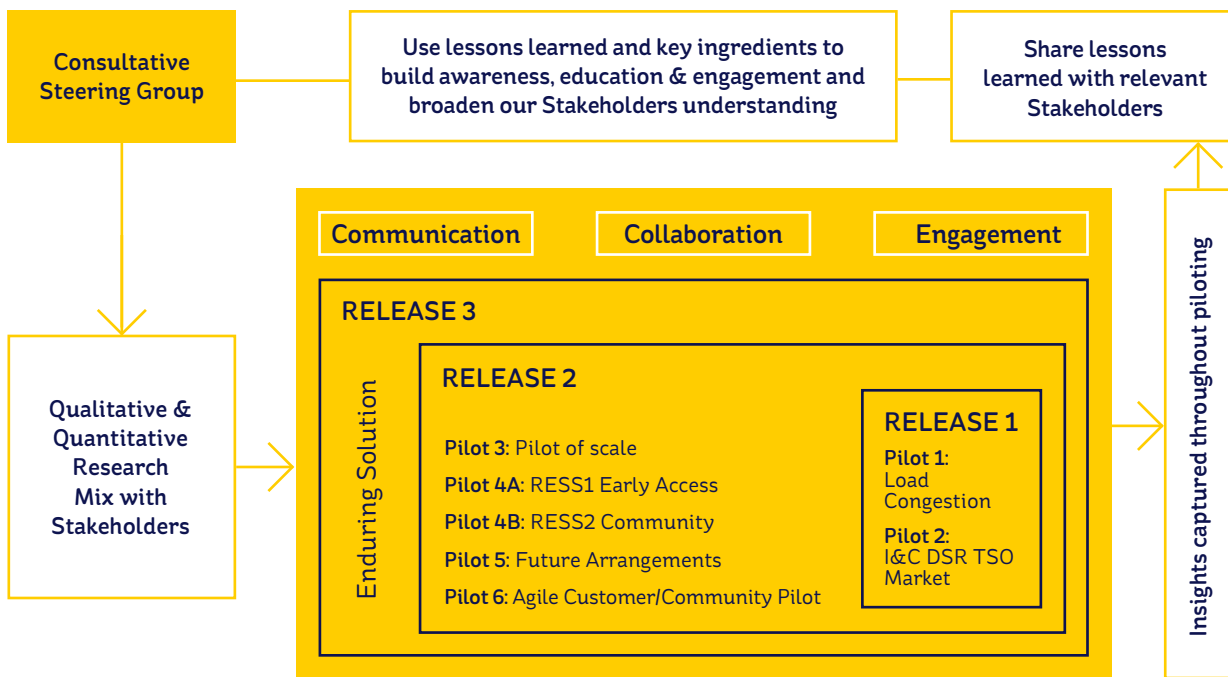
<p><b>Central focus of the stakeholders needs in the programme design and delivery</b></p>	<p>To date we have ensured that our stakeholders' views are reflected in the programme design and delivery by developing and continually updating a stakeholder map mapping an accountable management team member who is responsible for keeping them informed, engaged or to collaborate with them.</p>
<p><b>External awareness campaign</b></p>	<p>We launched a media campaign to build awareness for the programme and engagement in the consultation. Our stakeholders have a key role in this campaign with features across print, radio and social media.</p>
<p><b>Pre-consultation roundtable workshops</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders were invited to 5 pre-consultation roundtable workshops to ensure stakeholder perspectives framed the consultation documents from their design.</p>
<p><b>During consultation roundtable workshops</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders were invited to 5 roundtable workshops during the consultation to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to speak with the programme team and to field queries.</p>
<p><b>Consultation overview document</b></p>	<p>An overview document explained the background to the National Network, Local Connections Programme and the proposed approach to delivering the programme. It also provided summaries of each consultation document to enable stakeholders to easily navigate the consultation to their areas of interest.</p>
<p><b>Consultation document - proposed questions</b></p>	<p>Each document provided a set of proposed questions that could be useful for stakeholders to consider in reading and responding to each document. The consultation welcomed responses to specific questions or a more general response.</p>
<p><b>Consultation extension</b></p>	<p>The consultation period was extended by 2 weeks at the request of stakeholders. This applied to all documents except the DSO TSO Work Plan Covering 2022-2026 which was jointly delivered by ESB Networks and EirGrid.</p>

# 7 BUILD AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

## 7.3 AWARENESS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT - NEXT STEPS

Many factors will influence the direction and ambition for awareness, education and engagement in the National Network, Local Connections Programme throughout 2022 - 2025. The awareness, education, and engagement plan will need to continuously adapt, reflecting stakeholder targeting, stakeholder feedback, the phase of the programme lifecycle, evolving national policy directions, and many unknown, unknowns. We are introducing an agile approach to support this, as illustrated in Figure 5 as applied to piloting-related engagement and awareness.

FIGURE 5 AGILE FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT



Through this approach, we will use insights to inform the initial piloting-engagement plan(s), and once the pilots are active, continuous insight-generation and research will be used to enhance and inform our stakeholder engagement and dissemination. The approach involves sharing and collaborating with the Consultative Stakeholder Group, helping to ensure that our communication, education and engagement approaches deliver relevant information at relevant times based on stakeholder insights throughout the life of the programme.

We look forward to the close collaboration with industry & with our customers through all the consultation and engagement in delivering this Programme.

For more information on the National Network, Local Connections Programme, visit the National Network, Local Connections Programme website or for queries on the Programme, please email [engagement@esbnetworks.ie](mailto:engagement@esbnetworks.ie).