Two-way conversations are needed for effective science communication, but science communicators often struggle to engage the public online.

**Research Question:** Do particular social media strategies encourage two-way conversations between science communicators and the public online?

**Methodology**
- The Twitter and Instagram activity of four individual science communicators in North America and Europe was compared with three marine NGOs - one local, one national, and one international - for one month.
- Four steps were used to investigate social media strategies and follower engagement:
  1. Collected Twitter and Instagram posts/comments
  2. Interviewed 7 communicators
  3. Surveyed engaged audience members
  4. Analyzed audience social media bios

**Findings**
- Individual communicators use 5 interpersonal strategies:
  - Posting **3x as many selfies** as NGOs
  - Posting **3x as many off-topic posts** as NGOs
  - Using **more conversational language** than NGOs
  - Being **35x more responsive** to audience comments than NGOs
  - Prioritizing Instagram over Twitter for communication

**Encourage Two-way Conversations:**
- "I prefer to know the person I'm engaging with"
- "It is interesting to read about a person going through the same things in life"
- "It feels like engaging with a friend"
- "Conversations are ongoing, they're very ongoing"
- "Instagram ... allows easy communication with people, businesses, and organizations"

**Leading to Greater Social Media Engagement:**
- • **10x more comments** than NGOs
- • **6x as many engaged users** as NGOs

**Implications**
- **Formal Communicator**
  - Transmission
  - Public
- **Interpersonal Communicator**
  - Relationship
  - Public

Can be used for **any topic**, either online or offline.