

30 April 2014

Call for Participants: Corporate Reporting in a Digital World

The Financial Reporting Lab (the Lab) is undertaking a long term project looking at how companies are, and may use digital media to report externally to investors. We invite listed companies, investors and analysts to express their interest in taking part in the project.

The project will look at how companies use digital media (websites, videos, apps, social media platforms, blogs, etc.) in their corporate reporting communications to investors (including annual and interim reporting), and how investors use what is produced. The project is not about ending reporting by companies on paper, but rather is designed to understand how technology is, and can be used, to enhance communications with the investment community.

Scope of the project

The Lab's projects are driven by the needs of companies and investors. Project participants will be asked to help shape the agenda of the overall project; however we currently expect that there will be three broad areas of scope. Each will seek to answer fundamental questions:

1) *Digital Present: Corporate reporting through digital media*

- How are companies currently using digital media in external corporate reporting?
- How are investors using the digital media reporting produced by companies?
- What approaches to digital media might provide the most benefit to investors?
- Where should companies focus their attention?

2) *Digital Challenges: Barriers to the use of digital media in corporate reporting*

- What barriers are there for companies and investors in making the most of digital media for external corporate reporting?
- How would the regulatory regime need to change to support companies and investors in the use of digital media?

3) *Digital Future: Making the most of the digital opportunity*

- How might companies use digital media and technology for external corporate reporting in the future?
- How will investors use technology to consume information in the future?

Benefits of taking part in the project

All Lab projects are designed to provide practical benefits to participants as well as provide wider insight to the corporate reporting and investment communities. Company participants will gain an understanding of how investors use digital media now and how they are likely to use it in the future, allowing them to enhance the effectiveness of their own digital reporting strategy. Investors and analysts who participate will be provided with the opportunity to influence the future of company reporting and enhance the level and quality of communication that companies produce. Findings may influence the future regulatory agenda.

Corporate Reporting in a Digital World

Participation

We are interested in hearing from companies, investors and analysts who would like to be involved in this project and especially those interested in taking part in the first of the project areas '***Digital Present: Corporate reporting through digital media***'. This will investigate how companies are currently using digital media and technology to communicate financial and non-financial information to the investment community and will consider how the community is using what is provided. The Lab will publish observations on approaches to reporting that are currently considered to be most effective.

Companies participating in this phase of the project will be asked to provide examples of how they use digital media in corporate reporting. Beyond providing the examples, companies will meet with the Lab team to discuss their approach to digital media and will be invited to take part in round table discussions to help crystallise the project conclusions.

Investors and analysts participating in this phase of the project will be asked to meet with and provide input to the Lab team on their use of companies' digital media reporting and invited to a round table discussion.

Timing and output of the project

The Lab plans to undertake the project over the next 18 months with the first area being explored over the Summer. Participants do not have to commit to all three areas. Each is expected to result in a report which highlights findings, with the first of these expected to be published towards the end of this year.

Companies, investors and analysts should indicate their interest in participating (**by 30 May**) either via email at: FinancialReportingLab@frc.org.uk, or by telephone on 020 7492 2458.

Further information on the Lab and its activities can be found at:
<http://frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Codes-Standards/Financial-Reporting-Lab.aspx>.