European Digital Innovation Hubs in the Digital Europe Programme

DG CNECT
December 2021

#DigitalEuropeProgramme
The twin **green** and **digital** transition is at the core of the EU **industrial strategy**

Technologies enabling new business models for circularity and decarbonisation

**Horizon Europe**

- New technologies for the green transition

**Digital technology for everybody**

- Broad deployment of digital capacities

**Open strategic autonomy** = EU’s ability to make its own choices

**Chips Act**

**European Defence Fund**
Introduction to the work programme

**Work programme document(s)** (1) Main WP, (2) Cybersecurity WP, (3) **EDIH WP**, (4) HPC WP

**Expression of interest:** this call is reserved to entities designated from the Member States (or consortia where the coordinator has been designated)

**Initial Network of European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH):** this is the core objective

**Award criteria:** Relevance, Implementation, Impact

**Call document**

**Proposal template**

**Annotated Model Grant Agreement**


https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/digital

Objective of the EDIH call

• Select the Initial Network of European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH) from all designated candidate entities resulting from the Expression of Interest.

• Upgrade these entities to provide the complete set of services of an EDIH, including the necessary infrastructure, in a specific geographical area, covering the needs of the local SMEs, small mid-caps and/or public sector organisations with respect to their digital transformation.

• Network these EDIHs with each other and with other projects selected in Digital Europe Programme developing capacities in High Performance Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Advanced Digital Skills and accelerating the best use of technologies.
### Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Projected budget from DIGITAL for 3 years (in 1 000 EUR)</th>
<th>Budget per year (in 1 000 EUR)</th>
<th>Recommended number of hubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>8 390</td>
<td>2 797</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>9 273</td>
<td>3 091</td>
<td>3-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>7 507</td>
<td>2 502</td>
<td>3-5</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<td>1 766</td>
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<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>883</td>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>3 091</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>2-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>1 030</td>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
<td>6 182</td>
<td>2 061</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>11 628</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>14 130</td>
<td>14-28</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>3 091</td>
<td>3-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>3-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fixed budget per country**

Every EDIH is expected to have a budget between 1-2 M€ per year *(DIGITAL grant will cover 50%)*

MS are free to propose more smaller EDIHs or less larger ones.
Evaluation process

Proposals will be individually evaluated by three experts. A candidate ranked list for each country will be established based on the scores. “Ex aequo” prioritisation by ‘Relevance’ and then ‘Impact’.

The EC, assisted by the external experts panel, will adapt the candidate ranked list to ensure:

• at the country level:
  • the existence of at least one proposal per country with focus on Artificial Intelligence;
  • the geographical, technological and sectoral coverage of proposals within each country, with the objective to guarantee a coverage as broad as possible;

• at the level of the entire European network:
  • the possibility to fund cross-border transnational hubs by all countries involved;
  • the coverage of specific technologies and sectors which are not sufficiently covered by the entire network;
  • the coverage of the public sector, with the objective of reaching a coverage of at least 10% of the hubs providing services to the public sector.
  • In case the geographical, technological and sectoral coverage of a country is incomplete, proposals which have a significant overlap in scope with higher ranking proposals may not be ranked in the candidate ranked list.

• All the proposals in the final ranked list, for which there is no budget available will be awarded a Seal of Excellence.
What is an EDIH?

Each EDIH will:

• **provide services** based on a specific focus/expertise; select SMEs on a transparent basis

• **make available the relevant experimentation facilities** related to its specialisation

• **offer a seamless service** with Enterprise Europe Network and Startup Europe

• **act as interface with the European Commission** to support the implementation of specific sectorial, SME or eGovernment policies
EDIHs will:

- Offer support for digital transformation which is adapted to local needs, based on a specialisation
- Build regional ecosystems of users and suppliers, strengthening local innovation environment
- Connect to the whole of Europe through the network:
  - Share best practices with other hubs
  - Connect local SMEs to SMEs outside the region, building new value chains in Europe
  - Seek synergies with innovators, include artistic experimentation to find new uses of digital
- Disseminate digital capacities of Digital Europe Programme to local community

Network of 200+ European Digital Innovation Hubs

“EU-local” approach

SME/public entity

Local EDIH

European Network

Digital Transformation Accelerator (DTA) is a service provider for the hubs, assigned through a procurement contract
Train the trainer - ensure the best use of DIGITAL capacities

- EDIHs will act as a **multiplier** and **widely diffuse** the use of all the digital capacities built up under the different specific objectives of DIGITAL.
Why do EDIHs want to collaborate?

• They do not have the required expertise/facilities to help their customers (because specialised in something else)

• They want to serve all European companies that can benefit from their expertise

• They want to learn from others in the network and show others their best practices

• They want to achieve economies of scale and invest in common services and facilities with other EDIHs

• They want to support their local SMEs to become part of European value chains
## Types of networking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural</th>
<th>One off</th>
<th>Exchange of best practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Common services  
• Joint investments in infrastructure  
• Based on trust and win-win situations | • Based on specific needs of customers  
• Through match-making facilitated by the Digital Transformation Accelerator | • Through subnetworks sharing certain interests, e.g. technological, sectorial, demographics, etc  
• Organised by the Digital Transformation Accelerator |
Collaboration with Enterprise Europe Network/Clusters

Synergy potentials:

- Local/regional embedding of the networks
- SME strategy – key focus on digitalization: providing a seamless service
- Common commissioner for DG GROW and DG CNECT acting as Team Breton

EDIH
- Technological expertise
- Experimentation facilities
- Enable digital transformation of SMEs and public sector

Local ecosystem
- Internationalisation
- Innovation assessment
- Partnerships

Clusters
- Specialised expertise, services, resources, suppliers and skills
Impact and expected outcomes

• Main outcome: a balanced network of EDIHs

• Impact indicators to evaluate the performance of the hub
  • Number of businesses and public sector entities, which have used the EDIH. Where relevant, this will include a description of which Digital Europe capacities have been used.
  • Amount of additional investments successfully triggered
  • Number of collaborations foreseen with other EDIHs and stakeholders outside the region at EU level, and description of infrastructures jointly shared / joint investments with other EDIH.

• A set of additional impact indicators will be collected and analysed with the support of the Digital Transformation Accelerator:
  • Increase in digital maturity of organisations that have used the services of the EDIH network.
  • Market maturity and market creation potential of innovations, as defined in the JRC’s Innovation Radar methodology.
## Targets for the overall network

**Nr. of businesses and public sector entities which have used the European Digital Innovation Hubs’ services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2024</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2026</th>
<th>2027</th>
<th>2028</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. of businesses and public sector entities which have used the EDIH services (cumulative)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.600</td>
<td>9.600</td>
<td>17.600</td>
<td>33.600</td>
<td>57.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of businesses and public sector entities which have used the EDIH services (per year)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.600</td>
<td>6.000</td>
<td>8.000</td>
<td>16.000</td>
<td>24.000</td>
<td>32.000</td>
<td>40.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of businesses and public sector entities helped by each EDIH (per year)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of EDIHs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Digital Transformation Accelerator

Capacity building of EDIHs:

- Access to European capacities for digital transformation in HPC, AI, Cybersec, Robotics...
- Access to knowledge and facilities of other EDIHs (and of other initiatives like EEN)

- Supported by the "Digital Transformation Accelerator", a central node that animates the network
  - Networking events
  - Training the hubs ("train the trainer" events)
  - Best practice sharing
  - Interactive map of digital capacities
  - Collaboration with other relevant initiatives
  - Collaboration with other hubs not funded by DEP
  - ....
  - The DTA provides services & tools for building digital capacity

Capacity building = you get knowledge, skill and resources to make use of opportunities
The Digital Transformation Accelerator

Community building and training
- guidance for hubs
- training services and material
- matchmaking support
- community building events

Train the trainer
- on HPC, Cybersecurity, AI...

Connect to relevant initiatives
- Startup Europe, EEN, Horizon Europe projects, NCP, other hubs, etc.

Impact assessment and roadmapping
- help EC collect and analyse KPIs

Online presence, communication, tools and support
- high-quality multi-lingual web portal, success stories, catalogue, media presence, IT tools
In practice…

Most daily work for local SME and public services

My hub

Is there a test facility for AI applications in agri-food?

Is there a simple online course on cybersecurity for my customers?

Who else is working on digital technology for maritime applications?

My customer needs advice on how to grow their market abroad

I need to organise an online event but I don’t know how

How do I collect my KPIs?
**Timeline**

- **Call 1** – for designated entities
  - Open: 17 November – 22 February
  - Evaluation: 14 March to 29 April 2022
  - Information on evaluation results: End of May 2022
  - Signature of the grant agreements: earliest end of September, latest 21 November 2022

- **Call 2** – for designated entities, second chance
  - Open: Q3 2022 – Q4 2022

- **Call 3** – only in case the network has gaps. Will be a fully open call.
  - Open 2023

It is our intention to select as many EDIHs as possible in Call 1. Funding for 75% of EDIHs is foreseen + 20% budget flexibility.
Documentation available


- **Practical Handbook on Digital Innovation Hubs** as policy instruments to boost digitalisation of SMEs [https://europa.eu/TH89cf](https://europa.eu/TH89cf)


- **Specific guidance document** for collaboration between EDIH, EEN and Clusters


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Thank you

Contact

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