Questions and Answers: Digital Europe Programme

Find out the answers to your questions about the Digital Europe Programme.

Digital Europe Programme

General FAQ
What is the Digital Europe Programme?

The Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) is a new EU funding programme focused on bringing digital technology to businesses, citizens and public administrations. The Digital Europe Programme will provide strategic funding to answer these challenges, supporting projects in 5 key capacity areas: supercomputing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, advanced digital skills, and ensuring a wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society, including through Digital Innovation Hubs.

With a planned overall budget of €7.5 billion (in current prices), it aims to accelerate the economic recovery and shape the digital transformation of Europe’s society and economy, bringing benefits to everyone, but in particular to small and medium-sized enterprises.
Where can I find the work programmes of the Digital Europe Programme?

View the work programmes

Further information regarding the opening of the calls, including a direct link to the Funding & Tender Portal.
Are there national contact points for the Digital Europe Programme?

The European Commission from its side does not designate national contact points for the Digital Europe Programme.
Who is eligible to participate in the Digital Europe Programme?

While the purpose of the Programme is first and foremost to strengthen the Union’s digital capacities, it allows the possibility to have third countries associated to the Programme. Therefore, the funding will be available for entities from the EU Member States as well as other countries associated to the Programme.

Because of their particular and critical nature, participation in topics under the third Specific objective of the Programme (i.e. Cybersecurity) will be framed by the provisions of Article 12.5 of the Digital Europe Programme Regulation.

In addition, a set of topics in section 2 of the main work programme will also be subject to the provisions of Article 12.6 of the Digital Europe Programme Regulation (whereby participation is allowed provided participants comply with certain security conditions established in the work programme.)
The decision to associate a country (or not) is left to the Commission based on the scope and objectives of the Programme. At this time only EFTA countries that are members of the EEA are associated (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).
How can I participate in Digital Europe Programme calls?

Information on how to participate

Search for calls and tenders on the Funding and Tenders portal
In a call, what is the reference for the evaluation?

The call document provides more details than the topic description originating from the work programme 2021-22, and constitutes the main reference for evaluation.
What are eligible costs in a Digital Europe Programme call?

Co-funding will be based on actually incurred costs. The EU funding rate of 50% applies to the action’s eligible costs that have actually been incurred within its duration (see Article 6 of the General Model Grant Agreement for more information on the cost eligibility conditions).

Moreover, as stated in section 13 of the Call document, grants may not give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). Any given action may receive only one grant from the EU budget and cost items may under no circumstances be declared to two different EU actions (except under EU Synergies actions).

Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and it is made sure that cost items are clearly separated in the accounting and not declared twice, see Article 6.3.b.ii of the General Model Grant Agreement. Financial contributions from non-EU funding can be used to co-fund the action.
How can I submit a proposal?

Proposals must be submitted online before 17.00 on the day of the call deadline. A step-by-step guide can be found on the Funding and Tenders portal.

Do: Start on time: there are actions to undertake before submission (find partners, register an organisation). Don’t: Wait until the last moment to submit your proposal. Note that you can submit as many times as you want. Every submitted version will overwrite the previous one (which will be erased and cannot be retrieved). The call closing date and time are fixed.
Can partners in a project finance their own product that received a patent?

Funding is provided for the different activities explained in the work programme and the call for proposals. We provide funding to beneficiaries who implement those activities via reimbursing costs incurred by the beneficiary in connection with the action. A patent for a product is not a condition to participate in the Programme nor is it the main objective of the Programme to finance products, which received a patent, but it can be part of an action if the activity is in the scope of a call. You can also mention procurements and other activities if you want.

Information sessions and specific areas
Was the European Digital Innovation Hub webinar from 18/11/2021 recorded?

You can see the presentations and recordings on the event page.
Work on the EuroQCI is already underway, coordinated by the Commission in the case of the terrestrial segment, and ESA in the case of the space segment. This includes the first steps towards operational quantum key distribution (QKD) services, a highly secure form of encryption, building on the activities of the Horizon 2020 OPENQKD project.

In parallel, the participating countries are starting to design and construct national quantum communication networks. They are also starting to plan cross-border links to other networks that will operate at ground level and in space.

The EuroQCI will make use of innovative quantum communication technologies developed by the researchers of the EU-funded Quantum Technologies Flagship. The involvement of European industry partners and SMEs is also crucial to ensure that the critical components of EuroQCI are based on European technologies.
The EuroQCI is expected to contribute to the creation of a truly European quantum ecosystem, building on the achievements of researchers in this domain and strengthening the EU’s technological competitiveness.

Funding for the EuroQCI is being provided by the Digital Europe Programme and the Connecting Europe Facility, as well as Horizon Europe, ESA, and national funds, including the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

In 2021-2022, the Digital Europe Programme will fund support for: the development of European QKD devices and systems; the development and deployment of national quantum communication networks; a testing and certification infrastructure for QKD devices, technologies and systems that will ultimately be used in the EuroQCI.

In 2022-2023, the Connecting Europe Facility will fund support for cross-border links between national quantum communication networks, along with links between the EuroQCI’s earth and space segments.

Search for calls and tenders on the Funding and Tenders portal.

Further information on EuroQCI
Where can I find the presentations of the Workshop on World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 (WRC-23)?

View presentations of the workshop on World Radiocommunications Conference
Where can I find information about AI testing and experimentation facilities under the Digital Europe Programme?

View TEF: Questions and Answers
When will the call for the topic Data Space for Smart Communities (deployment) be launched?

The description of the topic 2.2.1.2.2 in the Work Programme 2021-2022 (.pdf) (page 42) incorrectly states that the indicative time of call opening is in the second call. Elsewhere in the document (page 12 lists the topics for Call 3) the topic is correctly announced as part of the third call, to be launched in autumn 2022.

Related content

The Digital Europe Programme
Body
This FAQ is meant as additional support to potential beneficiaries and based on actual clarifications provided. It does not replace official guidance as provided in the work programme and the call texts. It will be updated as more questions are received.