Towards a vibrant European network of AI excellence

The first European Network of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Excellence Centres held a kick-off meeting last week to set the tone for future collaboration, under the motto of “the whole is more than the sum of its parts.”

New network of AI excellence centres to drive up collaboration in research across Europe

Five projects have been selected to form the network, following a call launched in July 2019 (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/ai-excellence-europe-eu50-million-bring-world-class-researchers-together) to bring together world-class researchers and establish a common approach, vision and identity for the European AI ecosystem.

What will the European Network of AI Excellence Centres do?

- Support and make the most of the AI talent and excellence already available in Europe;
- Foster exchange of knowledge and expertise, and attract and maintain these talents;
- Further develop collaboration between the network and industry;
- Foster diversity and inclusion;
- Develop a unifying visual identity.

The 5 projects making up the Network

4 Research and Innovation Actions to mobilise the best researchers on key AI
topics.

- **AI4Media (https://ai4media.eu/):** focuses on advancing AI to serve media, to make sure that the European values of ethical and trustworthy AI are embedded in future AI deployments, and to reimagine AI as a beneficial technology in the service of society and media.

- **ELISE (https://www.elise-ai.eu/):** invites all ways of reasoning, considering all types of data applicable for almost all sectors of science and industry, while being aware of data safety and security, and striving for explainable and trustworthy outcomes.

- **HumanE-AI-Net (http://www.humane-ai.eu/):** supports technologies for human-level interaction, by providing new abilities to perceive and understand complex phenomena, to individually and collectively solve problems, and to empower individuals with new abilities for creativity and experience.

- **TAILOR (https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/952215):** builds an academic-public-industrial research network to provide the scientific basis for Trustworthy AI, combining learning, optimization and reasoning to produce AI systems that incorporate safeguards for safety, transparency and respect for human agency and expectations.

### 1 Coordination and Support Action

- **VISION (https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/952070):** to foster exchange between the selected projects and other relevant initiatives, ensuring synergy and overcoming fragmentation in the European AI community.

### Funding

The Commission invested €50m under the current Horizon 2020 programme, after an initial investment of €20m for the creation of AI4EU, the AI-on-Demand-Platform that allows the exchange of AI tools and resources across Europe.

### Next steps

The Network is the foundation of a larger future initiative through Horizon Europe, which is one cornerstone of the “ecosystem of excellence” set out in the Commission’s White Paper on AI (https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/white-paper-artificial-intelligence-european-approach-excellence-and-trust_en), and is a result of the Commission’s long-term vision to unify the European AI community and make Europe a powerhouse of AI. Priority shall be given to the development of PhD programmes, integration of AI in education programmes and not just in ICT related courses, and setting up internships.

### Related topics


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