DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: AI compute evaluation and deployment platform for EU infrastructure

Information for applicants

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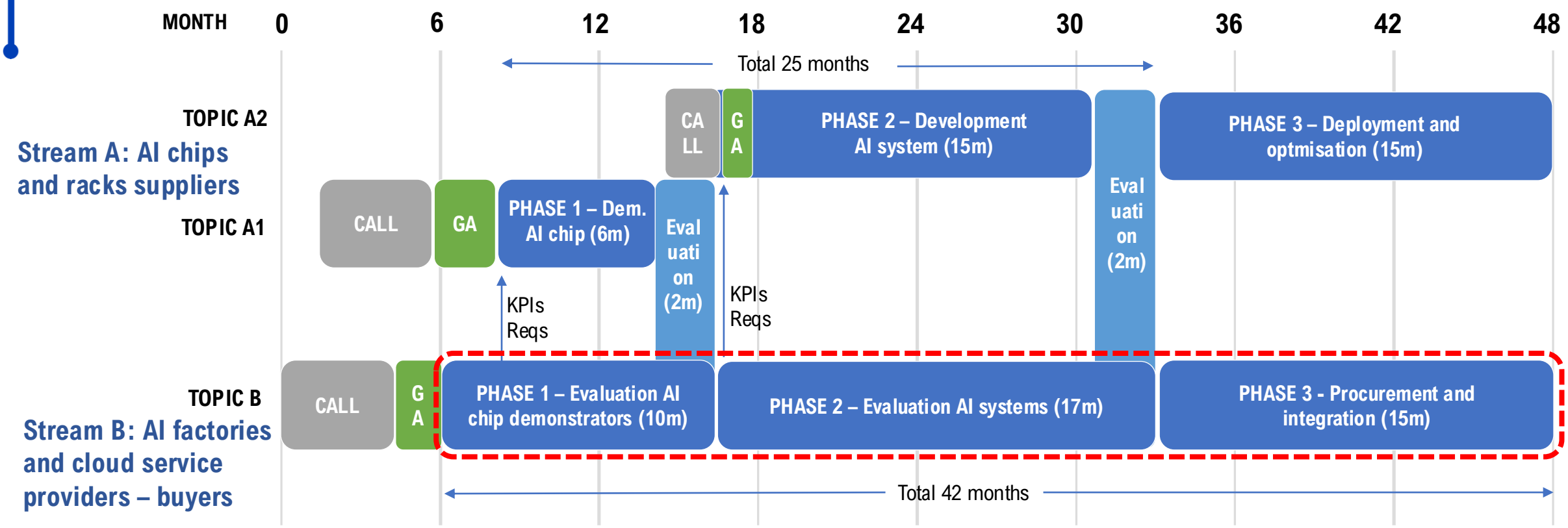
Info session, 3rd July 2026

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP

Context: Stream B, Topic B



Call documents

- Publication on **07 Jul 2026** with full package of call documents at:
  https://www.chips-ju.europa.eu/Open-and-Upcoming-Calls/

- **Work Programme documents** can be already found at:
  https://www.chips-ju.europa.eu/MAWP/

  - Multi-annual Work Programme 2023-2027
  - General Annexes to the Multi-annual Work Programme 2023-2027
  - Appendix 8 to the Work Programme - Chips for Europe initiative (CEI)

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP

Type of Action	Grant for Procurement
Indicative EU budget	EUR 70 million
Expected EU contribution per project	The Chips JU estimates that an EU contribution of EUR 70 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Co-funding from Participating States is expected to complement the EU contribution.
Mode	Co-funded with the National Funding Authority (NFA) One stage Call with submission of Full Proposal (FPP)
Call launch date	*07 Jul 2026*
Deadline FPP Phase	*23 Sep 2026 at 17:00 Brussels Time*

Agenda

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP

- Expected outcome & scope
- Admissibility & eligibility
- Funding
- Award criteria
- Call restrictions

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Expected outcome and scope (1/2)

- A **common EU evaluation platform** for AI chips and racks, with transparent KPIs, workloads and benchmark reports used for Chips JU selection and procurement decisions.
- **First pilot deployments** of European AI compute systems validated for EU sovereign partitions of AI infrastructure.
- **Structured collaboration** between buyers and suppliers, supporting deployment, integration and optimisation of European AI compute solutions.
- Stronger **EU demand** for European AI chips and racks, helping to create a market for deployment-ready solutions.
- Increased **EU technological sovereignty** across the AI compute stack for European datacentres.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Expected outcome and scope (2/2)

- **Total duration: 42 months**, organised in 3 operationally linked phases:
- **Phase 1 (months 0–10):** common KPI, testbed preparation and benchmark evaluation of Topic A1 chip demonstrators. Key milestones: M2 KPI/workload suite v1.0; M4 platform operational; M8 evaluation; M10 benchmark reports, AI Compute Excellence Label assignment.
- **Phase 2 (months 11–27):** KPI/testbed extension and benchmark evaluation of full AI systems (Topic A2 racks). M22 platform operational for racks and Phase 3 tender documents finalised; M27 procurement launch.
- **Phase 3 (months 27–42):** innovation procurement of pilot AI compute racks across multiple lots tailored to **AI Factory pool** (public contracting authorities) and **CSP pool** (EU Cloud Service Providers).
- Procurement targets **multi-rack clusters (Pods, indicatively 4+ interconnected racks)** rather than isolated single-rack deployments.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Admissibility

- **Admissibility conditions** are described in Annex 2 “General DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME conditions” to the Multiannual Work Programme 2023-2027 (General Annexes).
- **Page limits (FPP Phase):**
  - **Relevance:** 20 pages
  - **Implementation:** 40 pages
  - **Impact:** 20 pages
- Proposals with more pages are admissible and will be evaluated, but the pages in excess will not be considered.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Eligibility

- Eligibility conditions are described in Annex 2 “General DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME conditions” to the Multiannual Work Programme 2023-2027 (General Annexes).
- Specific eligibility conditions:
  - The consortium should consist of beneficiaries from at least three different Member States or EEA countries.
  - Maximum number of participants 15 (indicative; the consortium should remain focused, with a limited number of core buyer beneficiaries leading the procurement lots)
- Each proposal should be submitted by a consortium of EU-established legal entities forming a buyers' group, including:
  - at least one contracting authority or contracting entity within the meaning of Directives 2014/24/EU or 2014/25/EU, operating an EU AI Factory or comparable EU public AI/HPC facility, leading a procurement lot in Phase 3;
  - at least two EU-established Cloud Service Providers, leading one or more procurement lots in Phase 3

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Funding

- Indicative EU budget: EUR 70 million
- Additional considerations:
  - A limited share of the public contribution is allocated to Phase 1 and Phase 2, covering the evaluation platform, the workload and KPI work, the validation services and the procurement preparation. The majority of the public contribution is reserved for Phase 3, flowing mainly through procurement contracts to suppliers under the lots, together with installation and optimisation.
  - Up to EUR 10 million of the action budget may be reserved for procurement preparation and management, neutral benchmarking, testing and benchmark evaluation, legal compliance, and the Phase 1 and Phase 2 evaluation services to the Chips JU.
- Reimbursement rates:

Reimbursement rates as percentages of the eligible cost according to DEP.

Type of beneficiary	Maximum EU Contribution as % of the Eligible Cost according to DEP (*)
Undertakings carrying out economic activities (for profit, not SMEs)	25 %
Small and Medium Enterprises (for profit)	35 %
Public bodies and not-for-profit entities carrying out non-economic public-interest activities	50 %

(*) beneficiaries may ask for a lower contribution.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Award criteria

- Please refer to Annex 2 “General DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME conditions” to the multiannual work programme 2023-2027 (General Annexes).
  - Criterion 1 – Relevance
  - Criterion 2 – Implementation
  - Criterion 3 – Impact
- **Scores**:

The scores will be given with a resolution of one decimal.

Criteria	Range	Weight (**)	Threshold (*)
Relevance	0-5	1	3
Impact	0-5	1	3
Implementation	0-5	1	3
Total	0-15		10

(*) threshold applies to unweighted score.

(**) the weight is only used to establish the ranking of the proposals.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Call restrictions

- Subject to participation restrictions for the protection of European digital infrastructures, communication and information systems, and related supply chains, as described in Annex 4 to the multiannual work programme 2023-2027 (General Annexes).

- Legal entities that are established in EU Member States, EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway), but are controlled from third countries may only participate on the condition that they guarantee the protection of the essential security interests of the Union and the Member States and that they ensure the protection of classified documents information. Where applicable, security guarantees need to be provided after proposal selection.

- Non-EU subcontractors: eligible for specialised services not sufficiently available in the EU, if strictly necessary and identified in the proposal. Same safeguards apply to Phase 3 procurement contractors. See WP §5.2.3.

- Data localisation: all design and test data, builds, logs and KPI results must be processed and stored in the EU. External access via EU-audited remote controls only.

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Application steps

Application Form Part A

- Administrative part + EU budget
- Directly online in the portal

Application Form Part B

- Technical content
- Template to be downloaded and uploaded pdf from/to portal

Mandatory Annexes

- National Budget Table
- Ownership control declaration

Templates available portal/call documents

DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-AI-GfP: Part B & Mandatory Annexes

Part B and Annexes

In this section you may upload the technical annex of the proposal (in PDF format only) and any other requested attachments.

Part B *	Upload
List of previous projects	Upload
Ownership control declaration	Upload
Other annexes	Upload

Application Form Part B

NOT needed

Consortia Ownership Control Declaration (per applicant – merged pdf if needed)

National budget table

All Annexes are mandatory!!! (All annexes in pdf)

Further information

- Chips JU website (https://www.chips-ju.europa.eu/Open-and-Upcoming-Calls/) for further information on the calls.

- Calls@chips-ju.europa.eu for specific questions related to call documents.

- IT Helpdesk for questions regarding submission issues:
  https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/helpdesks/contact-form

- EC online manual:
  https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/om_en.pdf

- For questions about European research, you can contact the Research Enquiry Service via the webform :
  https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/contact-us/research-enquiry-service_en

Thank you for your attention!