



# DEP4ALL

THE NCP NETWORK FOR THE  
DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

## Project Idea and Concept Building

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16 June 2025

# This session will help you to

Understand  
how to develop  
project idea

Align your  
concept to DEP  
objectives

Understand  
what reviewers  
are looking for

Prepare  
successful  
proposal

# What are the programmes focus areas



High Performance Computing



Cloud



Cybersecurity



Skills



Best use of technologies



Chips

EU

- European Commission's strategic priorities
- EU Strategies: Data, Cybersecurity, AI, Chips Act, etc.

DEP

- Digital Europe Calls derived from priorities
- DEP Six Specific Objectives

YOU

- Applicants align proposals to fit the calls
- Organisational strategies shaping proposals to fit calls (Innovation, Business, Digital, Marketing, etc.)

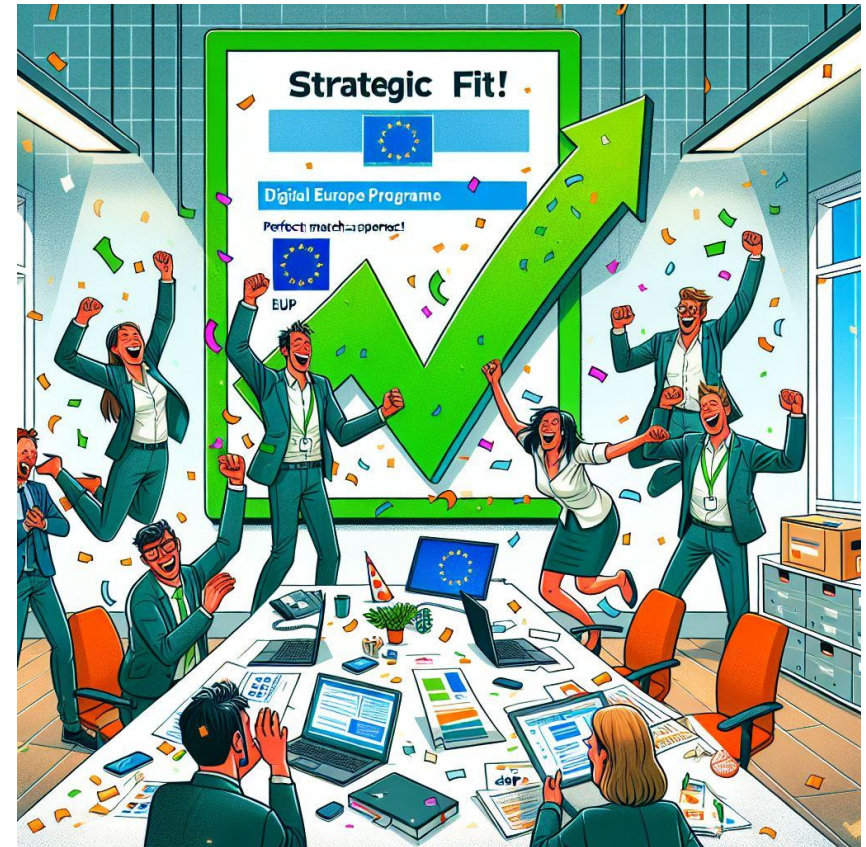
# If the proposal does **not align** well with your own strategy

- It may lead to internal resource strain, as teams work on unfamiliar or unrelated topics.
- The project might lack internal support or long-term commitment, reducing its impact.
- There's a higher risk of implementation challenges and missed opportunities for integration.



# If the proposal is **well-aligned** with your own strategy

- It reinforces your organisation's mission and builds on existing strengths.
- Project outcomes are more likely to be sustained and scaled after funding ends.
- It enhances internal motivation, stakeholder engagement, and overall project coherence.



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# Defining Your Own Objectives

## Use SMART criteria:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

### **Example for Universities:**

“Train 500 professionals in AI ethics by 2026”

### **Example for SMEs:**

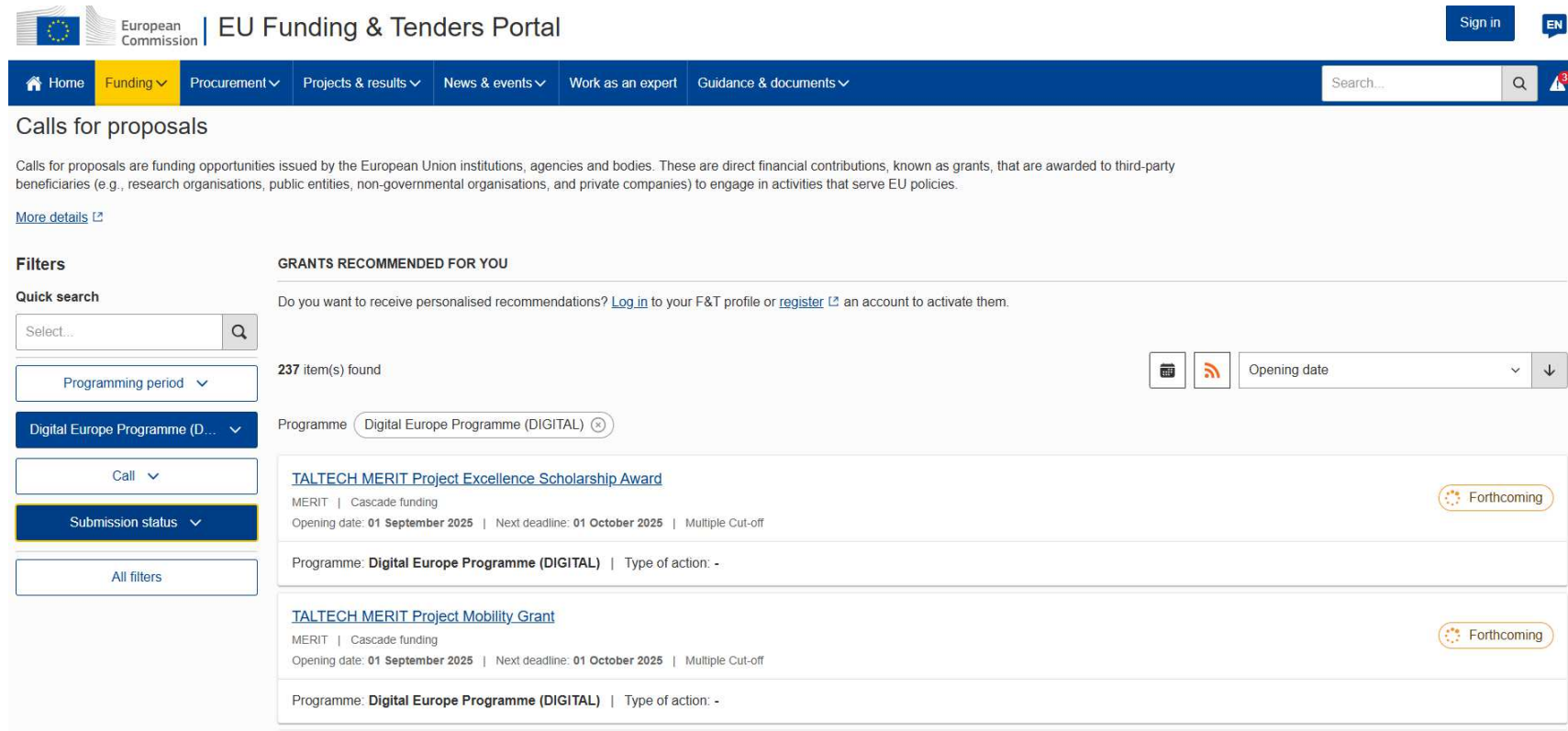
“Our solution will be available in 6 different markets by 2027”

### **Example for PO:**

“Our Public Organisation will have implemented AI service solution by 2026”

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# Is there a call out there that fits our objectives?



The screenshot shows the EU Funding & Tenders Portal interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, Funding, Procurement, Projects & results, News & events, Work as an expert, and Guidance & documents. A search bar is on the right. Below the navigation bar, the page is titled 'Calls for proposals'. A paragraph explains that calls for proposals are funding opportunities issued by the European Union institutions, agencies and bodies. A link for 'More details' is provided. On the left, there's a 'Filters' section with a 'Quick search' box, a 'Programming period' dropdown, a 'Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)' dropdown, a 'Call' dropdown, a 'Submission status' dropdown, and an 'All filters' button. The main content area is titled 'GRANTS RECOMMENDED FOR YOU'. It includes a question about receiving personalised recommendations with links to 'Log in' and 'register'. Below this, it shows '237 item(s) found'. There are icons for a calendar, RSS, and a dropdown for 'Opening date'. The first two results are 'TALTECH MERIT Project Excellence Scholarship Award' and 'TALTECH MERIT Project Mobility Grant'. Both are marked as 'Forthcoming' and include details about MERIT, Cascade funding, opening date (01 September 2025), next deadline (01 October 2025), and multiple cut-off. The programme for both is 'Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)' and the type of action is '-'. A red notification badge with the number '3' is visible in the top right corner of the portal interface.

European Commission | EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Sign in EN

Home Funding Procurement Projects & results News & events Work as an expert Guidance & documents

Search...

## Calls for proposals

Calls for proposals are funding opportunities issued by the European Union institutions, agencies and bodies. These are direct financial contributions, known as grants, that are awarded to third-party beneficiaries (e.g., research organisations, public entities, non-governmental organisations, and private companies) to engage in activities that serve EU policies.

[More details](#)

### Filters

Quick search

Select...

Programming period

Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)

Call

Submission status

All filters

### GRANTS RECOMMENDED FOR YOU

Do you want to receive personalised recommendations? [Log in](#) to your F&T profile or [register](#) an account to activate them.

237 item(s) found

Calendar RSS Opening date

Programme Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)

[TALTECH MERIT Project Excellence Scholarship Award](#)

MERIT | Cascade funding

Opening date: 01 September 2025 | Next deadline: 01 October 2025 | Multiple Cut-off

Programme: Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) | Type of action: -

[TALTECH MERIT Project Mobility Grant](#)

MERIT | Cascade funding

Opening date: 01 September 2025 | Next deadline: 01 October 2025 | Multiple Cut-off

Programme: Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) | Type of action: -

Forthcoming

Forthcoming

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# Well aligned proposal

Ensuring that the **Digital Europe Programme (DEP) call** you apply for is aligned with your organisation's operations and strategic goals is crucial for both the success of the project and the long-term sustainability of its outcomes.

When evaluating whether a Digital Europe Programme (DEP) call aligns with your organisation's strategy, potential applicants should carefully examine the few key elements typically found in the call documents.

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# Understanding the Call for Proposals

Read the call document carefully and identify:

- Objectives
- Scope
- EU Added Value
- Expected outcomes
- Eligibility criteria
- Budget, resources and timeline
- Impact and sustainability

**Be sure to read both  
Work Programme  
and Call Document  
(Funding & Portal)**

# The Objectives

## The Call

- Clearly defines challenges the call addresses.
- What is the main purpose of the call?

## Your strategy

- Check if these objectives match your organisation's mission, research focus, or service offerings.
- Does this call directly address you or do you have the solution (service offerings) to assist the target audience to meet these objective?

### Objectives

The aim of this call is to tackle the challenges of an effective integration of PQC algorithms in Public Key Infrastructures (PKIs), which offers efficient migration strategies and strong business continuity guarantees.

The call targets the different actors involved in the PKI ecosystems and supply and value chains, who all have a unique set of diverse needs and interdependencies, such as Certificate Authorities (CAs), intermediate CAs, researchers, end-users in different domains, and vendors.

# The Scope

## The call

- The scope of the action describes the thematic and technical boundaries of the call
- It clearly identifies what activities are allowed within the project and sometimes even identified what is not allowed / falls out of the scope.

## Your strategy

- Does your project idea fit within the scope of the call and leverages your existing capabilities?
- Are you able to perform any of the identified activities?

### Scope

Proposals shall target activities on the following subjects:

- design of digital signature combiners and key encapsulation mechanism
- the testing of deployment of certificates in protocols that use those certificates.
- the development of novel protocols for Automatic Certificate Management and revocation and of novel protocols for (privacy-friendly) certificate transparency.
- the development of methods and tools that can be used by experts across

Activities should include some or all of the following:

- Identification of requirements necessary to implement hybrid certificates.
- Development of approaches and techniques for constructing cryptographic combiners for different protocols.
- Testing of the combiners for issuance of new certificates for the different applications, taking into consideration the need to balance the growth of key, signature, and ciphertext sizes, which can lead to compatibility issues with standards, such as PKI certificates, revocation mechanisms, (privacy-friendly) certificate transparency mechanisms, the use of different cryptographic

# EU Added Value

In DEP, ***EU added value*** refers to the benefits and impact a project delivers **at the European level**, beyond what individual countries or organisations could achieve alone.

Projects that clearly demonstrate EU added value are often prioritised for funding.

To effectively address this in your proposal, consider:

- How does your project advance digital capabilities across Europe?
- Can your solution be scaled or replicated internationally?
- Are beneficiaries from multiple EU countries meaningfully involved?
- How does your project complement or build on existing EU initiatives?

Always link EU added value to the **impact** your project will have—both during and beyond the funding period.

# Expected outcome

## The call

- Describes the specific results or changes the European Commission wants to see as a result of funded projects.
- They measure the success of the programme and ensure that projects contribute meaningfully to EU digital goals.

## Your strategy

- Are you able to demonstrate how you will deliver or contribute to these expected results?
- Can you prove / showcase that you have the expertise, technology and or other resources to deliver those outcomes?
- Are there any gaps in skills or tools which can be filled through collaboration or subcontracting?

### Expected Outcome

- New combiners ensuring that cryptographic schemes provide at least 128-bit security against quantum adversaries.
- Experimental evaluation on hybrid certificates in several standard protocols that use those certificates, also considering options for different cryptographic algorithms at the root Certification Authority level and at the other levels, in terms of security, performance, and backward compatibility. The impact of such certificates in protocols should be tested via open-source libraries.
- New and/or improved open-source libraries for certificate requests, issuance, validation, revocation and (privacy-friendly) certificate transparency.

### KPIs to measure outcomes and deliverables

- Applicants should provide KPI's and metrics relevant for the action to measure and performance. Proposals may include the indicators listed below or their choice.
- When applicable, baseline and target values must be provided.
- Number of cybersecurity and/or tools deployed;

# Budget and Resources

When applying for DEP calls, it's essential to estimate costs realistically.

Projects often require co-financing, so the grant should be seen as a strategic accelerator, but not the sole reason to apply.

**Think of it as an investment in a project that aligns with your long-term goals.**

What risk can you identify? Technical, financial, operational

Do I have the resources to meet the obligations of the grant?

What do I want to get in return?

- Strategic alignment with organisational goals
- Capacity building and internal development
- Long-term impact beyond project duration
- Enhanced visibility and EU-level partnerships

*Type of action and funding rate*  
Simple Grants — 50% funding rate

**Funding rate:** 50% except for SMEs where a rate of 75% applies  
**Payment model:** Prefinancing – (x) interim payment(s) – final payment

# Impact and Sustainability

While most DEP projects run for 2 to 3 years, it's essential to plan for what happens after the funding ends.

DEP is designed to provide a head start, not permanent support. That's why long-term thinking is critical.

Especially important for research institutions and public organisations, which are expected to continue the activities independently.

To ensure sustainability, consider:

- Scalability – Can your solution grow or expand after the project?
- Policy Influence – Will your results inform or support national or EU-level policies?
- Business Model – How will the initiative be maintained or funded post-project?

The EU usually expects you to take ownership at the national or institutional level once the project concludes.

Standardisation efforts to facilitate interoperability across these various edge, cloud, and networking technologies should be undertaken by the proposal, when appropriate. Beyond these, proposed activities should cater for the long-term sustainability of the initiative, exploring long term strategies for self-sustainability of the initiative and for the developments of its different stakeholders.

# Tips for a strong DEP proposal

- **Be clear and concise:** Avoid vague or overly broad ideas. Evaluators appreciate precision.
  - **Use data:** Support your proposal with relevant data: internal, national, or international.
  - **Mirror the call language:** Use the same terms and structure found in the call document to show alignment.
  - **Align with EU and national goals:** Demonstrate how your project supports broader strategic objectives.
  - **Plan realistically:** Ensure your budget and timeline are feasible and well justified.
  - **Build a strong consortium:** Choose partners with complementary expertise and a shared vision.
  - **Seek support early; Contact your local DEP NCP for guidance and feedback.**
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# Thank you

Time for questions?



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# Setting up a consortium

Roles, tasks, responsibilities

Marie Timmermann, NCP Flanders

16 June 2025

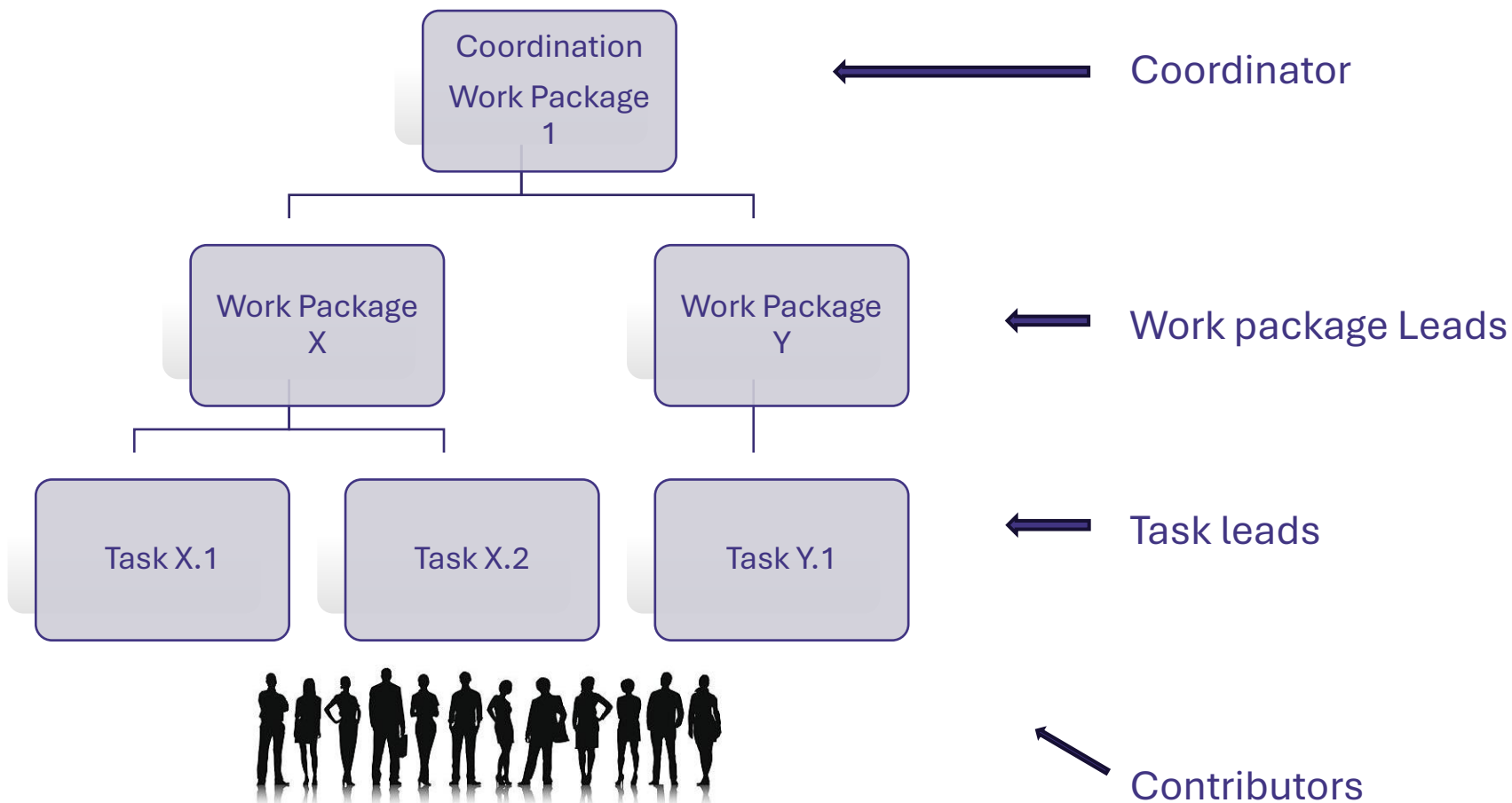


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## Roles in a consortium

# Structure of a project



# Roles and responsibilities in a consortium

## Coordinator

- Leading role in preparing and submitting the proposal, and negotiating grant agreement with Commission
- Overall coordination and administration of the project
- Contact person between Commission and project (partners)
- Financial management of the project
- Project monitoring and evaluation, progress reports

## Work package leads

- Coordination of the work package
- Ensure all tasks are on track regarding their objectives and timelines, projected milestones and deliverables
- Ensure technical reporting of work package's activities
- Work package leads together with the coordinator often form the consortium governance

## Task leads

- Coordination of the activities within a specific task
- Ensure that activities within the task are prepared and delivered in time
- Give task-specific input on technical reporting obligations within the work package

## Contributors

- Contribute to the specific tasks to which they are assigned based on their expertise and knowledge
- Ensure activities within a specific tasks are organised and delivered correctly and in time



**Tip for first time applicants:**

**Search for a consortium / partners with a track record in previous EU projects**

# Different roles in consortium

**Increasing time investment & level of influence**





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## Forming a consortium with the right partners

# Formal requirements of the call topic

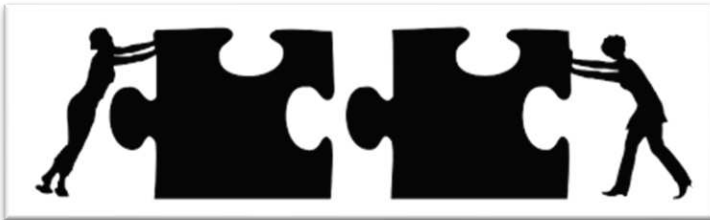
Always check the requirements for consortium composition in the call document!

- A minimum of three independent applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities) from at least three different eligible countries
- The coordinator must be based in an EU Member State

a consortium composed of a minimum 3 entities (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities) from 3 different eligible countries OR minimum 1 European digital infrastructure consortium (EDIC) composed of at least 3 Member States<sup>35</sup>.

a consortium composed of a minimum 6 applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities) from 5 different eligible countries.

# Choose your partners wisely



- Choose partners based on the project needs and requirements.
- Each partner should have specific knowledge / expertise that adds value to the project and is complementary to those of other partners.
- Partners should have adequate resources to fulfil their tasks, content-wise as well as regarding their role(s) in the project.
- Often recommended to have different types of partners (multi-disciplinary approach), to gather different kinds of expertise and include use cases/end users' perspective or specific facilities or infrastructure.
- Do not only focus on technical and content-related expertise, but make sure to also involve partners that can ensure coordination and communication and dissemination activities.
- Consider geographical distribution – even though this is not an official requirement, it is an EU programme after all.

# The right partners with the right expertise

The call text often gives hints:

Targeted stakeholders for the consortium are organisations such as: Fact-checking organisations certified by either the EFCSN or IFCN (see section 6 for more information), Civil society organisations, News Media, Academic institutions and commercial entities providing services which are relevant for the achievement of the call objectives.

National and EU authorities (as data users)/ regulatory agencies public and private entities, businesses, farmers, etc/providers of compliance data (data holders), data sharing organisations, universities.

The consortium should be representative of the European processor and semiconductor technology value chain and of the technology priorities of the Alliance, including end-user companies, associations and research and technology organisations. It should be

The consortium is highly recommended to include at least:

*The target stakeholders are technology companies, especially SMEs, working to provide and support other private and public organisations with cyber threat detection and CTI feeds.*

*Submissions from consortia, despite not mandatory, will positively contribute to the impact of the action.*



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# Partner Search & Matchmaking

Channels & Methods

Marios Roidis, EKT

16 June 2025



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## The Importance of Matchmaking

# Why?

- **Consortium Requirements**

Many DEP calls demand consortia with diverse profiles (research organizations, companies, public bodies, SMEs).

- **Added Value**

The right partners bring complementary skills, expertise, geographical coverage, and access to markets/end-users.

- **Increased Success Rate**

A strong, well-balanced consortium significantly boosts a proposal's chances of success.

- **Interdisciplinarity**

DEP often seeks interdisciplinary approaches, requiring partners from various sectors.

# Where to Start? Defining Your Needs

Before you search for partners, precisely define what you need.

## •Call Analysis

What types of organizations does the specific call for proposals seek?

## •Project Analysis:

- What technological gaps need to be filled?
- Which skills (technical, managerial, communication) are missing from your team?
- Do you need geographical coverage in specific EU Member States or Associated Countries?
- Do you require specific infrastructures or facilities?
- Do you need end-users or pilot sites for validation?

## •Create "Partner Profiles"

Draft a list of desired characteristics for each type of partner you're seeking



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## How we do it

# Partner Search Form

We utilize a specific form that potential proposers complete, and which is then shared among the national contact points to facilitate matchmaking



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## PARTNER SEARCH FORM

for

## Digital Europe Programme (DEP)

☐ I offer my expertise to participate as a Partner in a DEP Project  
☐ I am planning to coordinate a Project and I am looking for Project Partners

### TOPICS OF INTEREST

- TOPIC ID: |
- TOPIC Deadline: |
- Deadline for the expressions of interest: |

### PARTNER INFORMATION

- Description of the Legal Entity:
  - Higher Education ☐
  - Research Institution ☐
  - Public Administration ☐
  - Industry / SME ☐
  - NGO ☐
  - Other: ☐
- Please specify: |
- Description and expertise of the team:
  - Potential role in the project:
    - Technology provider ☐
    - Data provider ☐
    - Research ☐
    - Training ☐
    - Dissemination ☐
    - Other: ☐
  - Please specify: |
  - Expertise / competence needed in case of searching for Project Partners: |
- Other areas of interest for collaboration: |

### CONTACT DETAILS

Contact Person	Organization	City	Country	Phone	Email	Organization Website	Contact Person Webpage

### Project experience and track record:

- Already experience in EU funded projects as a:
  - Coordinator: ☐ YES ☐ NO
  - Partner: ☐ YES ☐ NO



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# Funding & Tenders Portal

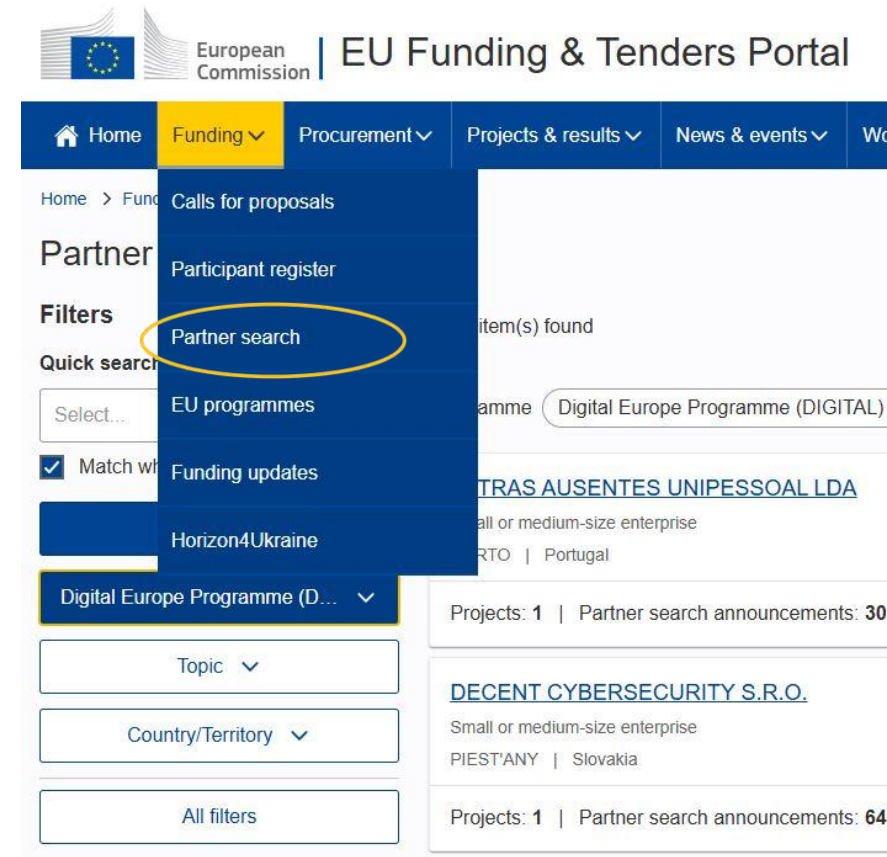
The official European Commission platform for funding opportunities.

## Partner Search Functionality

- **"Partner Search" tab within a call:** Browse existing expressions of interest or publish your own
- **"Organisation Register":** Search for registered organizations based on keywords, country, or type
- **Previous Project Participants:** Identify organizations involved in similar past projects (under DEP or other EU programmes like Horizon Europe)

## Tips for success

- **Clear Profile:** Create a detailed and compelling profile for your organization and your partner needs
- **Specific Keywords:** Use relevant keywords related to the call and your expertise
- **Be Proactive:** Don't just post; actively search and reach out to promising profiles



# The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) platform

The world's largest support network for SMEs with international ambitions.



Log in

## How EEN can help

- **Partnering Opportunities Database:** A vast database of business, technology, and research cooperation requests and offers from thousands of SMEs, research centers, and universities
- **Brokerage Events:** Often organize thematic matchmaking events (physical or virtual) focused on specific sectors or technologies
- **Tailored Support:** EEN advisors can provide personalized advice and facilitate connections
- **Why it's relevant for DEP:** While not exclusive to research, EEN bridges the gap between research and market, often connecting innovative SMEs, which are crucial for DEP's deployment focus

### Enterprise Europe Network

[Home](#) | [About us](#) | [Partnering opportunities](#) | [Local contact points](#) | [News](#) | [Events](#) | [Blog](#) | [Success stories](#)

[Home](#) > [Partnering opportunities](#)

## Partnering opportunities

#### Filter by

**Keywords**

**Type of profile**

**Type of partner**

**Type of partnership**

#### Partnering opportunities (32)

Showing results 1 to 10

Technology offer | TOGR20250602006

**A Greek organisation offers its knowhow and expertise as it seeking to join a consortium applying for funding for 'Civil security for society' cluster of projects**

A Greek organization with over 25 years' experience in providing services to organisations and SMEs offers its knowhow, particularly on funding opportunities, to a consortium submitting a proposal for the 'Uptake Acceleration' project (2025-01-SSRI-02). A research cooperation agreement is sought for complementary capacities e.g. proof of concept studies.

4 days ago

Greece

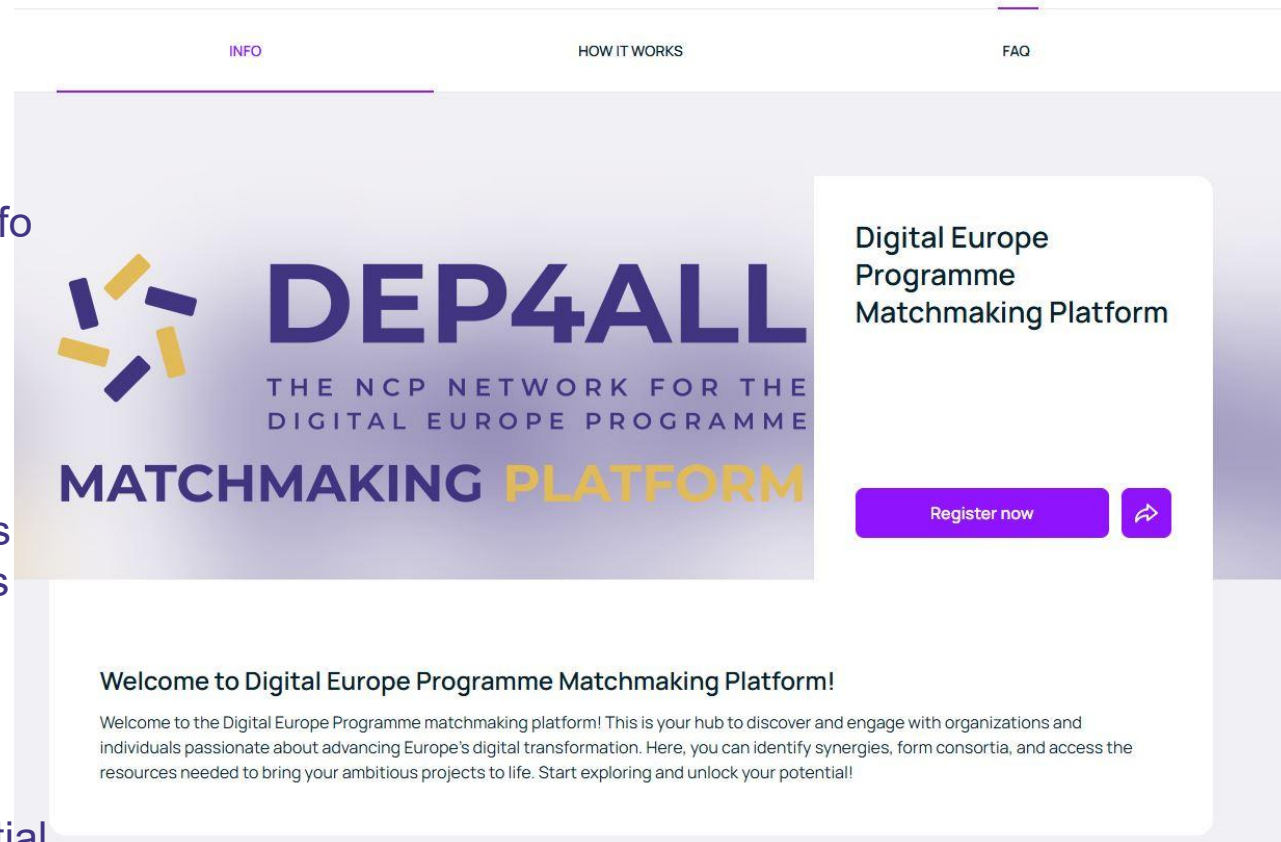
Type of partnership

# B2Match Platform

Dedicated Matchmaking for DEP

## How it works

- Event-specific:** Used for major conferences, workshops, or info days (e.g., DEP Info Days, specific calls)
- Profile Creation:** Participants create profiles outlining their expertise and collaboration interests
- Meeting Requests:** You can browse other participants' profiles and send meeting requests for short, focused bilateral meetings
- Efficient Networking:** Maximizes your networking time by scheduling meetings in advance
- Benefits:** Highly targeted, efficient way to meet multiple potential partners in a short period



# Other Channels & Methods - Beyond the Platforms

- **Conferences & Workshops:** Attend relevant European and international events in your field (digital technologies, cybersecurity, AI, data, etc.). Networking in person is invaluable
- **Professional Networks:** Leverage your existing academic, industry, and personal networks. Ask colleagues, mentors, or associations for recommendations
- **Social Media (LinkedIn):** Follow relevant groups, organizations, and experts. Use advanced search features to identify potential collaborators
- **Project Websites:** Review successful DEP (or similar EU-funded) projects and identify their consortia members
- **Publications & Research Papers:** Identify leading research groups or companies in specific technology areas



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## Q&A



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# Thank you!