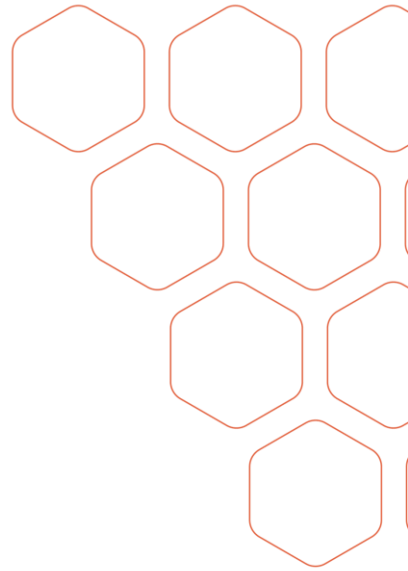




Regional Cooperation Council



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REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL (RCC)

EUROPEAN PUBLIC FUNDING GRANT SCAN FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS

ECONET (FUNDINGBOX GROUP)

22nd May 2024

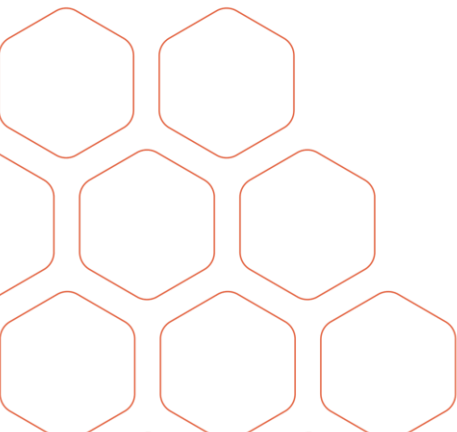


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1. OBJECTIVES OF THE GRANT SCAN AND HOW TO USE IT

This report, prepared by Econet, at the request of the **Regional Cooperation Council**, hereafter **RCC**, aims to provide the client with a Funding Audit or Grant Scan report with European Funding opportunities, including Cascade Funding.

This document, prepared in the framework of the “Follow-Up Support programme for the development of Digital Innovation Hubs in the Western Balkans”, is an update of the Grant scan document prepared in the framework of the previous Support Programme, dated September 2023.

For this update, it was agreed with RCC to carry out a first, simpler update of the calls highlighted in the first Grant Scan (the present document) of the previous Support Programme, and to carry out a second, more in-depth review later in the year, where it is expected that a greater number and variety of funding opportunities will be available.

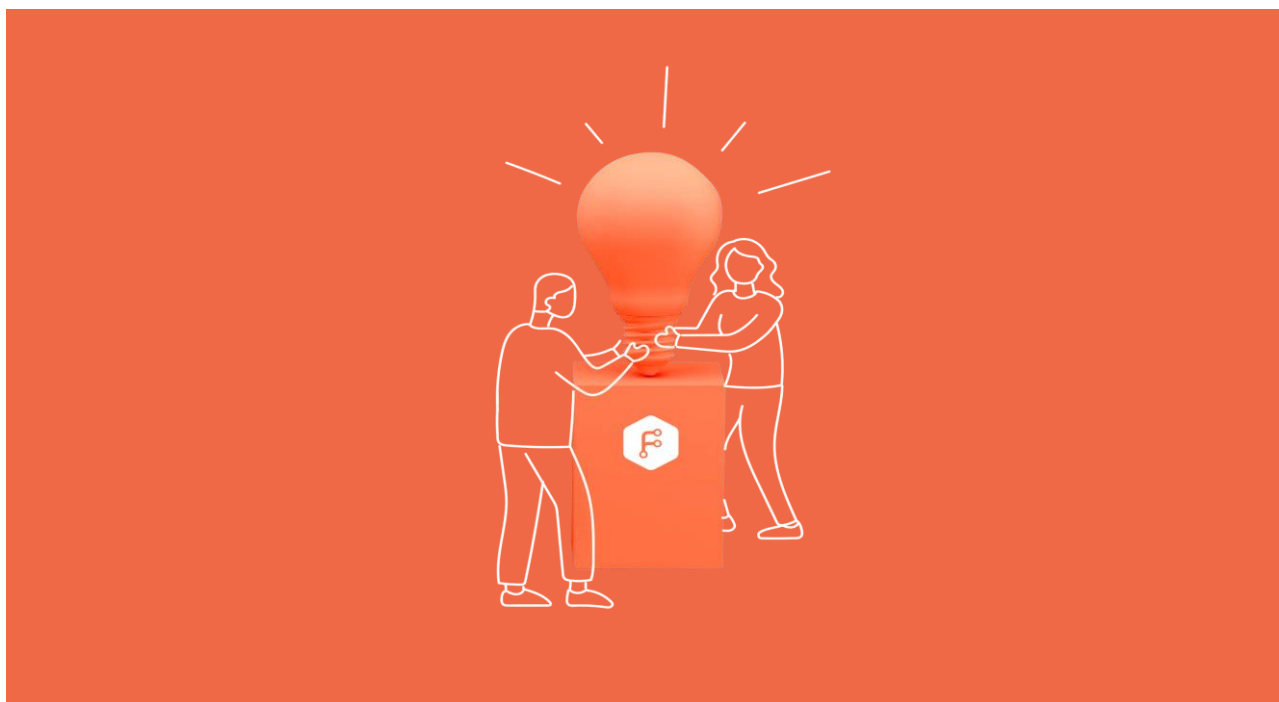
With this in mind, the priorities and focus of the previous grant scan are maintained containing this document the available European funding lines to which **Western Balkans Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs)**, hereafter, **WB DIHs** and entities of the DIHs ecosystem can apply for public funding in the areas of interest identified, namely:

- Bolstering innovation ecosystems and fostering networking opportunities for DIHs in the region and promoting collaboration with other EU regions.
- Providing advice and access to the digital transformation process for businesses.
- Training in advanced technologies and knowledge transfer to SMEs, as well as capacity-building schemes to empower DIHs in the WB.

Thus, a search and mapping of existing funding programmes was carried out based on the objectives, activities and interests of **RCC** and the **WB DIHs** in order to identify the most appropriate funding instruments available to develop their project/s.



HOW TO USE THE GRANT SCAN



This Grant Scan is structured as follows:

On the one hand, it contains an introduction to the **RCC** and **WB DIHs** interests, drawing on insights from Econet's implementation of the previous Support Programme. It is also based on information from secondary sources such as the “Mapping of Digital Innovation Hubs and Identification of Needs within the Western Balkans and Prospective Regional Cooperation Actions”. Additionally, it incorporates information from the initial kick-off meeting with the **RCC**, which took place on April 2, 2024.

Thus, point 2 includes information on the main lines of action identified for this Funding Audit.

On the other hand, point 3 as the core part of the report includes the Funding Audit for the project/s at the European level. In this Funding Audit, the opportunities presented are related to the calls of interest, giving a general description of them and a justification of the fit of the potential project. A calendar related to these opportunities is presented in point 4.

The report concludes with point 5, with a series of recommendations and conclusions for the presentation of applications. Special attention for this first update was given to opportunities of this year 2024.

2. INTRODUCTION TO WB DIHS AND ITS INTERESTS IN SEEKING FUNDING

2.1 THE WB DIHS

Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) in the Western Balkans region are mechanisms envisaged to empower and accelerate the digital transformation processes across the six economies - Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo^{1*}, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The RCC aspires to assist the Western Balkans to align more closely with the European Union, driven by the Common Regional Market (CRM) Action Plan 2021-2024.

Currently, the **RCC's** initiative aims to mould these hubs in a manner analogous to the exemplary European DIHs, which have been recognised for their excellence by the European Commission. The primary essence of these hubs, evident from the **RCC's** mapping, is to provide basic, supplementary services.

RCC VISION FOR WB DIHS

Position WB DIHs as one-stop solutions for regional SMEs, enabling them to seamlessly tap into technical, human, and financial resources essential for their digital evolution.

The main asset of the **WB DIHs** is its partners, who contribute towards providing a comprehensive offer of services in line with the industries' challenges whilst offering complementarity to existing commercial services as **DIH**. In this way, thanks to the technical and business knowledge provided by the consortium partners, digitalisation is made available to all regional companies.

Therefore, the **WB DIHs** act as catalysts, connecting businesses and public administrations with innovative solutions, and offering a holistic perspective.

MISSION OF WB DIHS

Propel regional enterprises into the digital age, encouraging the adoption of innovative business models, and thereby amplifying their competitive advantage.

2.2 WB DIHS'S INCOME STRUCTURE

The analysis of the expected income structure of **WB DIHs**, has a dual approach:

- the private income that a Hub obtains selling services to their clients, sponsoring some activities and with in-kind contributions made by partners
- the public income that will correspond to the funds that **WB DIHs** expects to secure in several public funding programmes.

^{1*} This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Public authorities play a key role supporting DIHs, mainly during the initial phases related to the creation, and the initial launch of their services portfolio. The funding structure of **WB DIHs** has a significant forecast of income from public funds, so it is important to have this overview of the main European public funding opportunities for the years 2024-2025.

To maximise the operational capacity of the **WB DIHs**, it is necessary to have enough resources to **deploy service portfolio**. Thus it is interesting to find specific programs aimed at funding the costs associated with the implementation of digital transformation services.

Another type of funding opportunities where there is room for specific activities to be developed by the **WB DIHs** is related to **digital training**.

In addition to the activities more closely related to the tasks of building and strengthening the service portfolio, it is also necessary to take into account the core funding needed to carry out those tasks of transversal nature that must be addressed by the partners, such as **management and communication activities**.

Funding Opportunities Highlighted in This Document:

It's important to differentiate between the types of grants and funding opportunities available. Some grants can be directly accessed by the DIHs and their member entities. On the other hand, there are grants that businesses can seek, with the support and guidance of the DIHs. However, **this document focuses on the support available to either DIHs directly, or to their member entities**, considering public entities, Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) and business associations, preferably.



3. FUNDING POSSIBILITIES FOR WB DIHS

In the evolving digital landscape of the Western Balkans, access to pertinent and synergistic funding sources is pivotal for the amplification and expansion of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs). Given the varying stages of maturity and capacity observed among the **WB DIHs**, there is a need for not just individual but also collaborative approaches in garnering support. Thus, central to this report's objectives is the identification of such funding programmes where at least two or more economies of the Western Balkans and the European Union can jointly participate. The shared vision is to encourage opportunities for experience exchange and best practice benchmarking, foster inter-regional networking, and cultivate capabilities.

This section aims to elucidate these funding opportunities, ranging from broad cooperative programmes such as Interreg or Erasmus, which foster general collaboration, to more specific initiatives centred on digitalisation projects, like Horizon Europe (HE) or the DIGITAL programme. Each presented opportunity is selected based on its potential to drive forward the collective growth of **WB DIHs**, helping them transition from their current roles of offering basic supplementary services to evolving into one-stop solutions for businesses keen on digital transformation.

3.1 INTERREG PROGRAMMES

Interreg programme started in 1989 and from its launch, it has stimulated cooperation between regions in and out of the European Union. These programmes play a vital role in operating from different perspectives with the common objective of reducing the obstacles of national borders in the European Union. In general, the different programmes structured under Interreg seek to strengthen economic and institutional collaboration, through cooperation projects framed in different thematic areas depending on the characteristics and particularities of each strand of territorial cooperation program. For the 2021-2027 period, Interreg is focused on addressing current challenges through the priorities of smart growth, green transition, social inclusion, territorial development, and efficient and sustainable infrastructure.

In general terms, the **eligibility of costs** are **staff cost, office and administration, travel and accommodation** and **external expertise**. Other eligible costs are **equipment expenditure** as well as **costs of infrastructure and works**, where the link with the project must be motivated.

Several Interreg cooperation programmes highlight participation between Western Balkan economies and other European economies, aiming to foster networking and collaboration:

Strand of cooperation: IPA

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is based on partnerships with the EU candidate economies and potential candidate economies. It supports administrative, social and economic reforms, as well as regional co-operation. The following involve economies on which this service focuses.

➤ [Interreg IPA ADRION](#)

- > [Interreg IPA Bulgaria – Republic of North Macedonia](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Bulgaria – Serbia](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Croatia – Serbia](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Greece - Albania](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Greece – Republic of North Macedonia](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Hungary-Serbia](#)
- > [Interreg IPA South Adriatic](#)
- > [Interreg IPA Romania - Serbia](#)

Strand of cooperation: *Interreg B*

Interreg B involves regions from several economies of the EU forming bigger areas. It aims to promote better cooperation and regional development within the Union by a joint approach to tackle common issues. Interreg B supports a wide range of project investments related to innovation, environment, accessibility, telecommunications, urban development etc. The following involve economies on which this service focuses.

- > [Interreg DANUBE](#)
- > [Interreg EURO-MED](#)

Strand of cooperation: *Interreg C*

Interregional cooperation, known as Interreg C, works at the pan-European level, covering all EU Member States and Partner States. It builds networks to develop good practices and facilitate the exchange and transfer of experience by successful regions. It is a tool to strengthen cohesion and overcome present and future challenges.

INTERREG VI C 2021-2027 covers 4 interregional cooperation programmes Interreg EUROPE, INTERACT, URBACT and ESPON sharing the objective to increase the capacity of policymakers to develop and implement better regional policies.

- > [Interreg Europe](#)

Interreg Europe is a key focus for projects involving Digital Innovation Hubs and it recently added seven new EU candidate economies², and this expansion included **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia** and **Serbia**. **The third call for proposals for this financial period is currently open and another call is expected in the first half of 2025**. In addition to the standard call for 2024, the highlight is that a **Restricted call for proposals was launched for the seven new Partner States** (including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia), which allows them to join projects approved in previous Interreg Europe calls.

² <https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/news/information-events-in-new-interreg-europe-countries>

Below are summary of programmes that are a priori of most immediate interest to **WB DIHs** given that they have upcoming deadlines.

3.1.1 INTERREG IPA CROATIA – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – MONTENEGRO

The **Programme area** includes 12 counties in Croatia, Brčko District and 109 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as 12 municipalities in Montenegro, which represents a total of 87,453.95 km² of territory and over 5.1 mil. inhabitants.

The DIHs would find fit for their proposals mainly in the Specific objective: *RSO1.1. Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies.*

Thus, DIHs are included among the expected target groups (participation as direct beneficiaries of the projects). It is also worth mentioning that the type of cross-border actions to be supported are largely aligned with the experience of **WB DIHs**, so their participation will undoubtedly strengthen the proposals.

It is also worth mentioning for their interest for SMEs in the DIHs ecosystem *RSO1.3. Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments*; implemented through the Small Project Funds call, which focuses on consortia formed by SMEs in collaborative projects of smaller scale of budget and duration (as a reference, projects of 130,000 euros, 6-12 months duration and 3 partners working on innovation activities). The calls (3 expected in May 2024, 2025, and 2026) are implemented by the Croatian agency for SMEs, Innovation and Investments (HAMAG BICRO).

Although the documents of the calls are not available at the moment, as a reference, the main characteristics of the call for standard projects are as follows: it is required the participation of at least 1 entity from each economy, and for RSO 1.1 the maximum budget per entity would be 400,000 euros, and its duration from 18 to 30 months. The EU co-financing rate is maximum 85% of the total eligible expenditures of the project.

Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro	
	Forthcoming
Programme	Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro
ID	Call for strategic proposals. 2nd Call for standard proposals
Priorities	RSO 1.1
Deadline model	One phase
Opening date	Call for strategic proposals: <u>May 2024</u> 2nd Call for standard proposals: <u>November 2024</u>
Deadline date	Call for strategic proposals: <u>July 2024</u> 2nd Call for standard proposals: <u>February 2025</u>
Indicative Budget	To be defined

Expected Budget per project	1.5 M €
Call information	<p>Actions funded under the RSO 1.1 will be focused on supporting actions that accelerate innovation and technology transfer.</p> <p>Examples of cross-border actions to be supported (non-exhaustive lists):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting cross-border innovation and technology based on smart specialization approach and improving cooperation between research institutions, SMEs, public sector, and business support organisations - Strengthening and modernising business support services (including small-scale infrastructure preferring nature-based solutions) that could help with: trainings, marketing, developing and or implementing new services/products, using ICT and new technologies, implementing innovative solutions in business organisation and processes (blockchain, big data, cloud computing, Internet of Things, advanced manufacturing, robotics, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, etc.) - Accelerating innovation and technology transfer including commercialisation of the final product or solution (e.g. blue and green economy, circular economy, agriculture, food production, fisheries and aquaculture, climate change, renewable resources, smart manufacturing, biodiversity, skills development for smart specialization). These technologies should belong on the low carbon technology list and will include applications to minimize resource consumption in other sectors (agriculture, food production, manufacture etc.). - Supporting pilot lines, early product validation, certification, advanced manufacturing capabilities including via science – business collaboration - Enhancing support services for SMEs and entrepreneurs to improve their access to research and technological innovations - Improving capacities and integration of innovative solutions using ICT for public sector needs including information, education and support to the public in use of e-services of public administration - Supporting the establishment of Living Labs, test-beds and ecosystems to promote the development and actual use of innovative solutions 10. Supporting cooperation of public authorities in development, implementation and monitoring of smart specialisation strategies and other policy tools for development of innovative economy - Establishing connections and long-term cooperation between research institution especially in joint capacity building for innovation and technology transfer to businesses.
Further information	https://interreg-hr-ba-me.eu/documents/
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>DIHs from BiH and Montenegro are well-positioned to benefit from this programme, given that the expected actions align well with the expertise of DIHs, so that, these calls may be a good opportunity to finance their activities. A priori, the call of interest will be the standard one, published in November 2024, although it is recommended to review the restricted call for strategic proposals in case synergies can be found.</p>

3.1.2 INTERREG IPA SOUTH ADRIATIC

The Interreg IPA South Adriatic 2021 2027 is a cross-border cooperation Programme with a total budget of 81.258.768,19. It widely builds on the results of the Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro programme 2014-2020.

The programme is managed by Puglia Region, which participates together with another Italian Region, Molise; Albania and Montenegro participate with the entire territory. The objective is to promote a smarter, greener, more connected, more social and better governed South Adriatic and to intensify cooperation in the area, by implementing joint actions between domestic and regional institutional and non-profit actors and by fostering smart inclusive and sustainable development.

WB DIHs would again find fit for their proposals mainly in the Specific objective: S.O. 1.1. *Enhancing growth and competitiveness of SMEs, through joint cross-border actions (SMEs)*, where the actions are focused on framework conditions for competitiveness of SMEs:

- green tourism, cultural / creative SMEs (e.g. joint artistic productions), health-care (e-health), agro-food, blue economy
- R&D actions, start-ups, S3 strategies, business advice
- border-crossing procedures, trademarks, patents, cybersecurity, fight against counterfeiting, adoption of EU rules for SMEs, digitalisation

European co-financing for Albanian and Montenegrin partners is 85%.

Interreg IPA South Adriatic: Italy -Albania - Montenegro	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Interreg IPA South Adriatic: Italy -Albania - Montenegro
ID	2nd Call for standard proposals
Priorities	S.O. 1.1 Enhancing growth and competitiveness of SMEs through joint cross-border actions
Deadline model	One phase
Opening date	<u>May (expected)</u>
Deadline date	3 months after opening
Indicative Budget	38.3 M€
Expected Budget per project	1.5 M €
Call information	Information on the call is not available, although it is expected to be published in the short term, and the expected actions of other Interreg Programmes in RSO 1.1 can serve as a general reference.
Further information	https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/south-adriatic-2021-27
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	

Recommendations for WB DIHs

Following the line of the previous Interreg IPA mentioned above, it is a good opportunity for 2024 for the Albanian and Montenegrin DIHs to finance their activities.

3.1.3 INTERREG EURO-MED

Its cooperation area covers 69 regions in 14 economies: 10 EU Member States and 4 Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) economies: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and the Republic of North Macedonia**. Around 25% of the European Union + 4 IPA economies, representing more than 140 million people, can benefit from these funds.

Taking into account **WB DIHs** general scope, funding opportunities under the following priority and specific objective of the programme can be identified:

Priority 1: A Smarter Mediterranean (thematic project)

- **Specific objective 1.1:** Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies.

The fourth call for proposals is currently open, with a deadline of 12 June. In addition, this [link](#) shows the calendar with the next calls for applications. An estimated number of 20 projects is expected for this call, of which 5 under the Innovative Sustainable Economy mission in which the **Specific objective 1.1** is situated. Only Test projects and Transfer Projects are eligible for this call.

Test projects: experiment common instruments, policies, strategies and action plans already developed to validate concrete solutions to be transferred. Indicative types of activities for Test projects:

- Conducting preliminary or feasibility studies (if necessary and not available by other projects)
- Adapting, testing solutions through pilot activities
- Assessing and monitoring results from the pilot activities
- Elaborating plans for transferability of the results

Test Project duration: maximum 33 months.

Transfer projects: optimise and share validated common instruments, policies, strategies and actions plans to have the stakeholders adopt them. Indicative types of activities for Transfer projects:

- Conducting preliminary or feasibility studies
- Developing initial stakeholder mapping to define target roles and objectives.
- Developing and implementing of a targeted public relations strategy
- Designing, customizing and deploying modules for transfer of results in a step-bystep approach.

Applications for Transfer projects are strongly encouraged.

Transfer Project duration: maximum 27 months

As a minimum, the project partnership must be composed of partners based in five (5) different economies within the Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area. The Lead Partner must be a public body, or a body governed by public law.

In the context of the mission “Innovative sustainable economy”, additional target groups are:

- SMEs, enterprises and business support organisations (including DIHs)
- Sectorial agencies in the field of the mission
- Higher education and research organisations
- Civil society, local communities, interest group and NGOs

Interreg Euro-MED Open for submission	
Programme	Interreg Euro-MED
ID	4th call: Thematic Projects 5th call: Thematic Projects (Strategic Territorial Projects only):
Priorities	PO1
Deadline model	One phase
Opening date	4th call: Thematic Projects (Test and Transfer Projects only): <u>12 March 2024</u> 5th call: Thematic Projects (Strategic Territorial Projects only): <u>June 2024</u>
Deadline date	4th call: Thematic Projects: <u>12-June 2024</u> 5th call: Thematic Projects (Strategic Territorial Projects only): <u>September 2024</u>
Indicative Budget	4th call: 44 M€ 5th call: 35 M€
Expected Budget per project	Test projects: 2,5 M€ Transfer projects: 1,5 M€ Strategic Territorial Projects: publication of the call pending
Call information	<p>The development of research and innovation capacities of the 5 helix stakeholders (Public authorities, Industry, Higher education and Research organisation, Civil society), in particular in the context of S3, and the uptake of advanced technologies is a driver to accelerate the transition towards innovative, sustainable and resilient ecosystems in the Mediterranean. The results of the projects within this specific objective should aim at reinforcing sustainable economic sectors and the capacity of private and public stakeholders to implement a sustainable economy. Indicative list of solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solutions promoting climate friendly innovations and/or the uptake of advanced technologies related to S3 such as the development of new or acceptance of biobased products. - Solutions establishing innovative sustainable business models, practices, processes and capacities, in particular for SMEs of the bioeconomy sector. - Solutions promoting innovative sustainable entrepreneurship and enhancing new skills and habits (especially among young people, new/emerging sectors and those in transition) such as the promotion of green/blue skills and jobs, and of sustainable behaviors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solutions developing, implementing and monitoring of S3, in particular for the reinforcement of public stakeholders' capacities. - Solutions proposing access to financial schemes or tools for innovative products or services (Green and Blue finance), in particular for SMEs and public stakeholders. - Solutions enhancing the creation value among 5helix stakeholders and cooperation pattern such as aligned policies and business practices or industrial symbiosis.
Further information	https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	The Interreg Euro-MED call presents a propitious opportunity for the WB DIHs from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and North Macedonia to fortify their objectives of digital innovation. Importantly, with the programme's expansive reach across both EU and pre-accession economies, it bridges the aspirations of the Western Balkans with broader European ambitions.

3.1.4 INTERREG EUROPE

Interreg Europe has a **budget of 379 million Euros** to help local, regional and domestic governments and other organizations across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. Interreg Europe creates an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions to regional development issues. They support the exchange of good practices and policy learning among European regions in the 36 Partner States, including as a new addition from **2024 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.**

The programme contributes to all EU priorities and strives for better regional governance through capacity building. The axis of interest for **WB DIHs** would be located at *Smarter Europe*, which includes the following themes:

- > Research & innovation capacities
- > Digitisation
- > SME competitiveness
- > S3, industry and entrepreneurship
- > Digital connectivity

The cross-border dimension of the programme promotes collaborative synergies. Since the projects mandate participation from at least three programme economies, this offers **WB DIHs** an avenue to consolidate inter-economy relations, aligning EU member states, Switzerland and Norway, and strengthening regional integration.

Furthermore, given that the DIHs typically operate under non-profit umbrellas or are often aligned with public institutions, they meet the applicant/partner criteria laid out by the Interreg programme. This positions them advantageously to join collaborative projects in the realm of digitalisation.

Interreg Europe would present two opportunities for participation for **WB DIHs** for 2024.

- > On the one hand, it would be the participation in the third call for projects, with a deadline of 7 June.
- > The other would be to take advantage of the **Restricted call for proposals** launched for the seven new Partner States (**including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia**), which gives them the **opportunity to join projects approved in previous Interreg Europe calls**. The restricted call opened on 20 March and will close on 7 June 2024 (shares the dates with the third call for standard proposals). You can consult the relevant information in this [link](#).

Interreg Europe Open for submission	
Programme	Interreg Europe
Call	Third call for projects Restricted call for the seven new Partner States
Specific Objective	Smarter Europe
Deadline model	One phase
Opening date	20 Mar 2024
Deadline date	7 Jun 2024
Indicative Budget	<u>Third call for projects</u> : 52 M € <u>Restricted call</u> : No specific amount is allocated to this call. The final committed budget will depend on the number of submitted requests approved by the Monitoring Committee.
Expected Budget per project	<u>Third call for projects</u> : 1-2 M €. <u>Restricted call</u> : Depends on the extension request of each approved project.
Call information	<p><u>Third call for projects</u>:</p> <p>The projects bring together policy organisations from at least three different countries. For four years, they learn from each other and work together on a shared policy issue.</p> <p>The lessons they learn lead to better regional policies and a more sustainable economic, social and environmental impact on the ground for the people and the places they serve.</p> <p>The call is aimed for:</p> <p>Public authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - domestic, regional, local public authorities - other relevant bodies responsible for developing and/ or implementing regional development policies. - authorities responsible for developing and/ or implementing the Investment for jobs and growth programmes. <p>Organisations relevant for regional development policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business support organisations (development agencies, innovation agencies, chambers of commerce, clusters, Digital Innovation Hubs, etc.) - Environmental organisations (environmental agencies, energy agencies, NGOs, etc.) - Education and research institutions (universities, research centres, etc.) <p>Private non-profit organisations can receive 70% of their cost refunded.</p> <p><u>Restricted call</u>:</p>

	<p>At the end of 2023, 7 EU candidate economies joined the Interreg Europe programme: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine, offering new opportunities to the projects and Policy Learning Platform. First and second call projects were developed at a time where these opportunities did not exist yet. Therefore, the objective of the present call is to give the possibility to all approved projects to work with organisations from the new Partner States through the extension of their partnership.</p> <p>The main information points to be taken into account are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the 150 projects approved in the first and second calls of Interreg Europe, the possibility to extend the existing partnership is limited to a maximum of two additional partners per project. - Although the quality assessment of the requests will be very light, the requested changes (activities planned) of the approved project should be relevant and that the related budget should be coherent. - The budget of the new partner(s) should be reasonable and proportionate to their involvement in the project and in line with the planned activities. - In addition to the budget allocated to the new partners, the project will be able to increase its original total project budget by up to 3% of the initial amount. - In general WB DIHs should be incorporated into projects as “discovery partners”. The discovery partner is involved in the project to get acquainted with the interregional exchange of experience process supported within Interreg Europe. The objective is to increase its capacity on the issue addressed by the project but also on the management of interregional cooperation projects. A discovery partner is expected to participate as much as possible in all the main activities of the project (e.g., in the main interregional policy learning events). In any case, the type of entity to be incorporated will depend on the needs of each project. - For new partners, the process of joining new projects is done through the networking campaign launched by Interreg Europe, fully online. They will have to register and then use the Networking area to match with approved projects.
<p>Further information</p>	<p>https://www.interregeurope.eu/next-call-for-projects https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/news/announcing-a-restricted-call-for-project-proposals</p>
<p>PERSONALISED INFORMATION</p>	
<p>Recommendations for WB DIHs</p>	<p>Interreg Europe Third Call is an interesting call for Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) involving public authorities and private non-profit organizations focused on exchanging best practices in public policies. The key challenge and opportunity for WB DIHs is to collaborate with partners from three out of four of these geographical areas: North (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden); East (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia); South (Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain); West (Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland).</p> <p>It is relevant to mention that projects that involve coordinators or members from the Western Balkans are highly encouraged due to their recent inclusion in the program.</p> <p>On the other hand, the restricted call constitutes an interesting opportunity for WB DIHs to join approved projects. You can consult its conditions at this link. To take advantage of this opportunity, we recommend you to follow these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Click on the following link for instructions on how to participate in the networking and registration area

- In this [link](#) you can consult the list of previously approved projects that are currently looking for partners.

ECONET RECOMMENDATION

The general recommendation is to prioritise calls that are open or have an earlier closing date, which in this case are Interreg Europe (where the entities of Albania, BiH, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia are eligible) and Interreg Euro-MED (where entities of Albania, BiH, Montenegro and North Macedonia are eligible).

We suggest prioritising the **Interreg Europe restricted call for proposals**, which offers a strategic advantage by allowing integration into an already funded project, thereby reducing the effort compared to submitting a new proposal.

Looking ahead, **Interreg South Adriatic** (expected to open in early May), will be relevant for entities in Albania and Montenegro.

Entities from BiH and Montenegro should also monitor the upcoming Strategic call for proposals of Interreg **IPA Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro**, also scheduled for May (publication pending). Otherwise, the second call for standard calls will be launched in November 2024.

For the other programmes (e.g. Adrion) which have not yet announced their 2024 call dates, it is recommended to keep up to date by regularly visiting their official websites, as linked in this document.

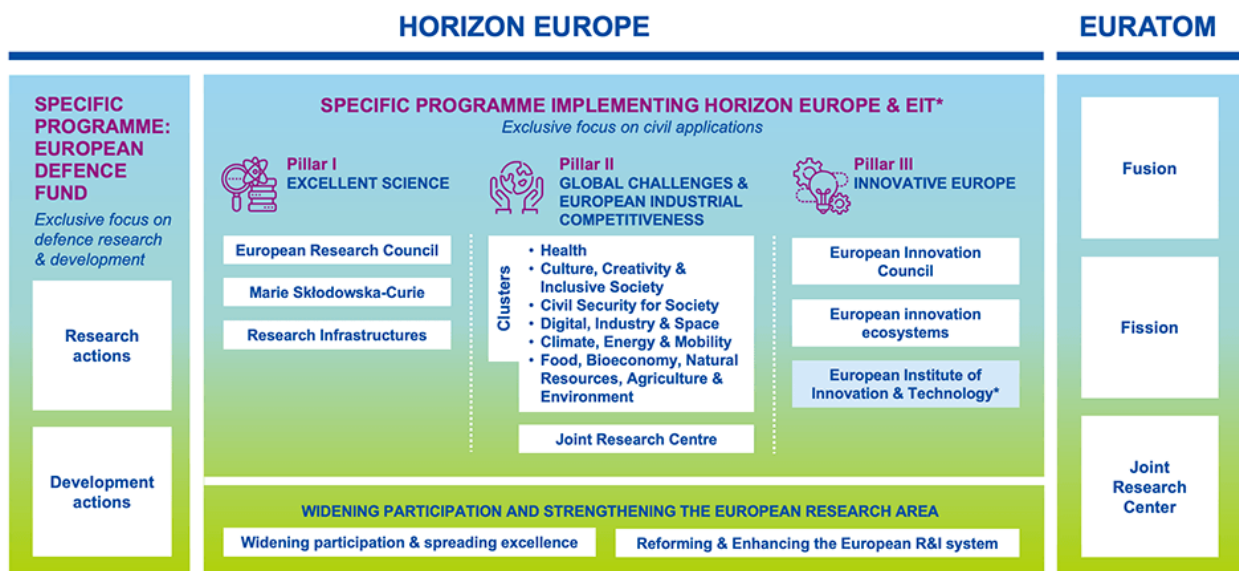
For partner search, we recommend initially connecting via the Follow-Up Support Programme to incorporate consortia members from other eligible WB economies. To complete the consortium, engaging with European partners who have a history of participation in these programs is advisable. You can find this information on keep.eu. In addition, these programmes accompany the launch of their calls with the organisation of infodays and events beneficial for networking and partnership building. In some programmes, specific tools for finding partners are also available on the respective programme websites.



3.2 HORIZON EUROPE

The 9th Framework Programme, also known as Horizon Europe, replaced the previous programme Horizon 2020 (H2020) with a budget of €100 billion.

The structure of Horizon Europe, which can be described as an evolution of H2020, lays under three distinct Pillars, supported by activities to widen participation and strengthening the European Research Area (ERA), each part contributing to the common Horizon Europe objectives:



The description of these pillars is the following one:

- **Pillar 1 Excellent science:** aiming to increase the EU's global scientific competitiveness.
- **Pillar 2 Global Challenges & European Industrial Competitiveness: supporting** research relating to societal challenges and reinforcing technological and industrial capacities through clusters. It sets Missions, that will have specific goals and will be launched from within the pillar, establishing a comprehensive portfolio of projects.
- **Pillar 3 Innovative Europe:** stimulating market-creating breakthroughs and ecosystems conducive to innovation.
- **Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area:** optimising strengths & potential for a more innovative Europe.

The most interesting opportunities for WB DIHs would be found in **Pillar 3 Innovative Europe** and **Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area**. In addition, individual opportunities of potential interest to DIH members are also identified in Pillars II.

Please note that, in order to participate in Horizon Europe, any entity should previously do some steps:

- **ECCAS Account.** To register an account, each Team Member should go to the EU Login account page
- **PIC Number.** You need to register your organization to participate in a proposal or call. Follow the link to register your organisation to get a PIC number
- **Follow the next steps required** to assign a LEAR, register and validate your bank account, etc.

3.2.1. OPPORTUNITIES IN PILLAR III

This pillar will focus on scaling up breakthrough and market-creating innovation through a new European Innovation Council (EIC) as well as activities aimed at enhancing and developing the overall European innovation landscape. It will also include support to the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

Pillar III aims to foster all forms of innovation, including breakthrough innovation, and market deployment of innovative solutions.

The European Innovation Council will build on the success of the Enhanced EIC pilot in Horizon 2020 and will serve as a 'one-stop shop' for European innovators. It will channel funding through two main instruments:

Accelerator – this instrument will bridge the financing gap between late stages of innovation activities and market take-up to effectively deploy breakthrough market-creating innovation and scale up companies. The Accelerator provides market entry and market deployment support to technology companies in the form of blended finance. EIC blended finance includes part grant or reimbursable advance (to cover innovation activities) and part investment, either via equity or other forms of investment such as convertible notes, loans, guarantees, etc., for the actual market deployment of the company.

Pathfinder – building on the success of the Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) Open scheme this instrument will support future and emerging breakthrough technologies.

European Innovation Ecosystems will connect with regional and domestic innovation actors and support the implementation of joint cross-border innovation programmes by Member States and Associated Countries, enhancing soft skills for innovation in addition to other types of research and innovation actions. Actions will complement the ERDF support for innovation eco-systems and interregional partnerships around smart specialisation topics.

The calls in this block could be very relevant for **WB DIHs** because it could be used to reinforce actions to build and dynamise the ecosystem surrounding the DIHs.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) will continue to fund existing Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), whilst looking to establish new KICs in emerging priority areas, which will help to strengthen sustainable innovation ecosystems across Europe. The Institute will also foster the development of entrepreneurial skills and innovation via a ‘lifelong learning perspective’ and support the entrepreneurial transformation of European universities. Finally, the EIT will also bring new solutions for global societal challenges to the market, thus contributing to the objectives of the ‘Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness’ pillar.

As of the date of this document (April 2024), there are opportunities for **WB DIHs** in the European Innovation Ecosystems.

3.2.1.1 European innovation ecosystems

The **WB DIHs** could play a direct role in Coordination and Support Actions. Participating in them would have the great added value of being able to directly apply methodologies and knowledge from other areas of Europe in the Western Balkans (these projects involve several partners spread across the continent working towards a common goal).

Expanding Academia-Enterprise Collaborations	
	Forthcoming
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-EIE-2024-CONNECT-02-01
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	6 Jun 2024
Deadline date	19 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 2.5 million approx.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 0.5 million approx.
Call information	<p>The action supports co-designed programmes of activities of at least two (2) years, proposed jointly by educational institutions, research institutions, and other R&I actors from ‘emerging’ and ‘moderate’ innovation ecosystems and the private sector from innovation hubs (‘strong innovators’ and ‘innovation leaders’), to ensure better connectedness between higher education institutions and research organisation with other actors of innovation ecosystems, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement of business experts into the implementation of networking activities and building innovation ecosystem around the university/research institution. - Engagement of students, graduates, researchers and workforce from various disciplines and departments into the innovation ecosystem, with a focus on networking and building networks around educational and research institutions as centres of gravity, and engaging in companies’ structures and business processes. - Engagement of students and researchers in start-ups from both their immediate local environment and beyond (regional, domestic, transnational) working with various actors from the innovation ecosystem to experience what starting and running a venture entails, such as raising funds, pitching events, creating,

	<p>editing, and adapting business models in the creation process from idea to market, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of synergies between students, graduates, researchers, innovators, education institutes, research performing organisations, and business partners, locally, at EU level, and globally targeting the creation of networks and communities of practices in the field of deep tech to stimulate the market uptake of results and new technologies, as well as their co-creation.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-eie-2024-connect-02-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>By default, Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) include partners from both academia and industry, making them well-suited to participate in this topic. Moreover, proposals must include partners from emerging and moderate economies. Therefore, WB DIHs are particularly valuable as partners for proposals initiated from other regions.</p> <p>We recommend that WB DIHs register themselves as potential partners in the topic's partner search register, clearly highlighting their unique value propositions. entities.</p>

Mutual learning and support scheme for national and regional innovation programmes	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-EIE-2024-CONNECT-02-02
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	6 Jun 2024
Deadline date	19 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 1 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 0,1 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Projects results are expected to contribute to at least four (4) of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced fragmentation of innovation ecosystems and domestic/regional start-up support schemes; - Increased cooperation, learning, and exchange of knowledge between domestic and regional innovation support public authorities and agencies in order to ensure that their innovation funding schemes respond to the requirements of the Plug-in certification for step 2 of the European Innovation Council (EIC) Accelerator; - Improved ongoing and/or set up of new domestic and regional innovation funding programmes whose criteria are fit to pass the certification for the Plug-in scheme; - The use, requirements, and access to the Plug-in scheme are well communicated to the innovation ecosystem stakeholders, particularly start-ups and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs); - A more homogeneous, equal, and aligned approach in the evaluation of projects under national and regional support schemes; - Enhanced cooperation among domestic and regional public authorities and agencies and SMEs and start-ups, particularly between innovation 'leaders'/'strong' innovators and 'moderate'/'emerging' innovator countries[1];

	- Stable pipeline of high-quality projects to the EIC Accelerator Step 2.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-eie-2024-connect-02-02
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	This call would be of potential interest to partners integrated in the consortium of DIHs with the profile of a public innovation agency or a public entity with competences in the field of innovation (at regional or economy level).

3.2.2. WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence actions under Horizon Europe contribute to building research and innovation capacity of Member States, Associated Countries and **Outermost Regions that underperform in terms of R&I performance**. This last aspect makes Widening particularly attractive for **WB DIHs**.

The actions will strengthen economies' potential for successful participation in transnational research and innovation projects, promote networking and access to excellence.

Participants in the programme will be able to upgrade their research and innovation systems, making them stronger and allowing the EU as a whole to advance together, in line with the policy objectives of the European Research Area.

The following are the currently published calls of interest for **WB DIHs**. Additionally, more calls of interest will be published with the WP 2025, scheduled for early 2025.

Hop On Facility Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-06-01
Type of action	Research and Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Multiple cut-off
Opening date	10 Jan 2023
Deadline date 2	26 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	EUR 40.00 million.
Expected Budget per project	The total indicative budget is EUR 0.1 to 0.6 million aprox.
Call information	The Hop On Facility allows for legal entities from low R&I performing countries to join already selected collaborative R&I actions, subject to the agreement of the respective consortium and provided that legal entities from such countries are not yet participating in it. The scheme aims to improve the inclusiveness of Horizon Europe by involving more research institutions from Widening countries under Horizon Europe Pillar 2 and EIC Pathfinder actions. Main selection criteria are excellence and added value of the new partner performing a relevant additional task in the project. All consortium partners need

	to agree on the accession of the new partner whereas the R&I relevance and complementarity needs to be demonstrated. The accepted application will trigger a GA amendment with the service in charge of the related topic.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-widera-2023-access-06-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>Proposals must be submitted to the Hop On facility call from the coordinator of a consortium funded under Pillar 2 or EIC Pathfinder of Horizon Europe with a valid grant agreement that does not have any participant from a country eligible to host the coordinator under the Widening component (Widening country). The duration of the “new” Hop On activities will depend on the duration of the ongoing Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Action (RIA) projects which the new partner will join.</p> <p>Hop On Facility is limited to the addition of a single partner to consortia with no participants from widening countries.</p> <p>The matchmaking is primarily left to the initiative of applicants, both coordinators interested in extending their consortia and hop-on candidates seeking suitable host projects. For the latter case, candidates are encouraged to screen the list of eligible projects published on the call web site on the Funding & Tenders Portal, while also using information published under CORDIS.</p> <p>Coordinators may use the partner search tool and also contact NCP organisations, notably the project NCP WIDERANet. List of funded projects under Horizon Europe pillar 2 and the EIC Pathfinder https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon/hop-on</p>

ERA Talents Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-WIDERA-2024-TALENTS-03-01
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	11 April 2024
Deadline date 1	26 September 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	EUR 40.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 1.00 to 3.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>The ERA Talents action aims to boost interoperability of careers and employability of research and innovation talents across sectors, with a centre of gravity in Widening countries.</p> <p>Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened human capital base of Widening countries in R&I, with more entrepreneurial and better-trained researchers, innovators and other R&I talents; - A more balanced talent circulation, both geographical and cross-sectoral; - Boosted R&I capacity and R&I support capacity, as well as contribution to increased excellence of the research-performing organisation in Widening countries; - A more structured and impactful collaboration between academia and businesses; - Increased set of research, entrepreneurial and other transferable skills and competences;

	- Improved employability and sustainable career prospects of diverse talents within academia, industry and beyond.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-widera-2024-talents-03-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	This call is not of direct interest to WB DIHs but it may be relevant individually for research organisations or business entities included in the WB DIHs, to foster cross-sectoral talent circulation and academia-business collaboration.

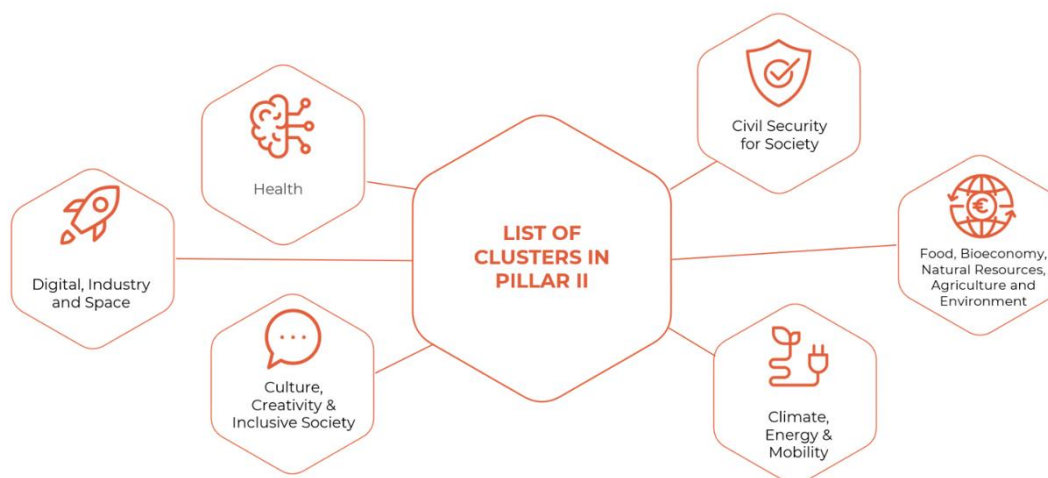
Teaming for Excellence	
	Forthcoming
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-WIDERA-2025-ACCESS-01-01-two-stage: Teaming for Excellence
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Two-stage
Opening date	03 Dec 2024
Deadline date 1	10 Apr 2025 (First Stage)
Deadline date 2	20 Jan 2026 (Second Stage)
Indicative Budget for topic	EUR 270.00 million.
Expected Budget per project	The total indicative budget is EUR 8.00 to 15.00 million approx.
Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased scientific capabilities of the coordinating institution and the host country enabling the coordinator and other potential entities from that country to successfully apply for competitive funding in the European Union and globally; - Improved the R&I culture of the country hosting the co-ordinator (indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, values towards R&I) through centres of excellence as lighthouses and role models; - Stimulus for institutional and systemic reforms and R&I investments at economy level taking into account the enabling conditions on governance of smart specialisation introduced under cohesion policy programmes as far as applicable; - Strengthened and mutually benefitting collaboration with partners from leading scientific institutions from abroad; - Development and promotion of new research strands in relevant domains; - Developed and enhanced research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies; - Contribution to the achievement of the specific objectives of the supporting economy/regional/EU programme as complementary funding; - Enhanced innovation and integration of planned processes, services and products of the centre; · Enhanced co-operation and synergies with other European projects.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-11-widening-participation-and-strengthening-the-european-research-area_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf ³

³ A link to the work package is included as the call is not yet available on Funding & Tenders at the time of this writing.

PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	This call is not of direct interest to the WB DIHs, although it may be of interest to individual partners for improvement, since it supports the creation of new centres of excellence or upgrading the existing ones, and therefore indirectly help to enhance the excellence of the DIHs.

3.2.3. OTHER POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN HORIZON EUROPE: PILLAR 2

Pillar II moves beyond the societal challenges familiar under Horizon 2020, tackling major global challenges and addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to ‘improve people’s lives and to protect the planet for future generation’. At the same time the calls under Pillar II will address Europe’s competitiveness in technology, embracing challenges which are often complex and require interdisciplinary solutions and activities from research to innovation. Pillar II is organised into six clusters, with a supporting area (JRC activities), and crosscutting ‘Missions’.



3.2.3.1 Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive society

This cluster aims to strengthen European democratic values, including rule of law and fundamental rights, safeguarding our cultural heritage, and promoting socio-economic transformations that contribute to inclusion and growth.

This cluster is structured in three intervention areas: democracy; cultural heritage; and social and economic transformations. In some of the calls, technological advances and application of Information and Communication Technologies are required. Although these areas are not aligned with the main focus of **WB DIHs** identified necessities, in certain types of projects, it may be interesting to add a use case in the Western Balkans within a project led from another European country.

In any case, at the present time no open calls with this approach are identified in this Cluster, so **WB DIHs** should wait for the publication of the Work Programme 2025 (planned for early 2025) to consider possible calls of interest.

3.2.3.2 Cluster 3: Civil Security for Society

Cluster 3 has the vision to support wider EU responses to those security challenges while ensuring free movement and protecting the integrity of the Schengen area. This means supporting “a resilient and more stable Europe that protects” as well as for this purpose supporting a competitive European civil security industry sector. As those challenges are rapidly evolving and social and technological developments are making a response increasingly complex, security research can serve as a tool to move from a reactive approach to security to a proactive approach based on foresight, prevention and anticipation.

Cluster 3 will support in particular the Commission policy priority ‘Promoting our European way of life’, as well as ‘European Green Deal’ and ‘Europe fit for the digital age’. It will in particular support the implementation of the Security Union Strategy, the **Counter-Terrorism Agenda**, the border management and security dimensions of the **New Pact on Migration and Asylum**, **EU Disaster Risk Reduction** policies, the **EU Maritime Security Strategy** and the **EU Cybersecurity Strategy**.

In the [Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans](#)⁴, European Commission together with Ministers from six Western Balkan partners — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia — commit to **Increasing cybersecurity, trust and digitalisation of industry**: The EU and the Western Balkan region have a common objective to improve online security and trust. It is a relevant fact that **Western Balkans are the ones who have experienced the most internet security problems**, especially related to viruses, attacks on networks and illegal access.

Several **WB DIHs** could show capabilities for developments in the field of cyber security. In this context and with these facts about Western Balkans' situation and strategy, the opportunities offered by these four calls could be exploited. Taking into account the Work Programme 2023-2024 and its amendments (published in April 2024) with the last calls scheduled for 2024 or early 2025, Econet has identified the following calls where there are possibilities for **WB DIHs** members to participate as partners:

Advanced real-time data analysis used for infrastructure resilience		Forthcoming
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)	
ID	HORIZON-CL3-2024-INFRA-01-03	
Type of action	Research and Innovation Actions	
Deadline model	Single-stage	
Opening date	27 Jun 2024	
Deadline date	20 Nov 2024	

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/IP_18_4242

Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 5.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 5.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved capabilities for risk and faulty events identification in infrastructure networks and smart cities through real-time analysis (including big data) by public and private actors via secured and trusted platforms and interconnected systems where the collaboration follows clear legal and political frameworks; - Tools and processes for facilitating stakeholders efforts to identify, analyse, assess and continuously monitor risks and boost adaptive capacity to unexpected events risks in advance by allowing for the analysis of various data sources (e.g. audio, video, social media, web-content, spatial information, sensor or machine generated data); - Fast and continuous real-time identification, classification and tracking of hazardous agents, contaminants or anomalies in infrastructure networks and supply-chains; - Interoperable interfaces and improved collaboration between infrastructure operation detection and response systems, domestic/EU risk management/coordination centres and first responder equipment in order to allow for remote on-scene operations considering citizen knowledge; - Increased cyber-resilience of industrial xG networks and cloud data covering specific infrastructure domains - Improved ability to map in real-time the source(s) of risk factors that could endanger the networked infrastructure supported by Earth Observation and geolocation data. If the analysis includes processing of personal data, it should consider including a risk assessment or privacy impact of individuals and society.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2024-infra-01-03
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	It might be an ambitious topic for many WB DIHs now. However, for certain members that act as Centres of Competence, it may be worthwhile to seek a consortium to join, given their potential to handle technical tasks within a work package.

Mitigating new threats and adapting investigation strategies in the era of Internet of Things	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL3-2024-FCT-01-01
Type of action	Research and Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	27 Jun 2024
Deadline date	20 Nov 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 5.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 5.00 million aprox.
Call information	Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved capabilities for risk and faulty events identification in infrastructure networks and smart cities through real-time analysis (including big data) by public and private actors via secured and trusted platforms and interconnected systems where the collaboration follows clear legal and political frameworks; - Tools and processes for facilitating stakeholders efforts to identify, analyse, assess and continuously monitor risks and boost adaptive capacity to unexpected events risks in advance by allowing for the analysis of various data sources (e.g. audio, video, social media, web-content, spatial information, sensor or machine generated data); - Fast and continuous real-time identification, classification and tracking of hazardous agents, contaminants or anomalies in infrastructure networks and supply-chains; - Interoperable interfaces and improved collaboration between infrastructure operation detection and response systems, domestic/EU risk management/coordination centres and first responder equipment in order to allow for remote on-scene operations considering citizen knowledge; - Increased cyber-resilience of industrial xG networks and cloud data covering specific infrastructure domains - Improved ability to map in real-time the source(s) of risk factors that could endanger the networked infrastructure supported by Earth Observation and geolocation data. If the analysis includes processing of personal data, it should consider including a risk assessment or privacy impact of individuals and society.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2024-fct-01-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	Although the call is likely to be of limited interest to WB DIHs, this call could be relevant to partners who have capabilities in the field of the Internet of Things (IoT) and Cybersecurity.

Approaches and tools for security in software and hardware development and assessment	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01-01
Type of action	Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	27 Jun 2024
Deadline date	20 Nov 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 37.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 4.00 - 6.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved hardware and software security engineering; resilient systems design; - Improved access to testing of hardware and software in virtual, closed and secure environments; - Systematic and, where possible, automated study of vulnerabilities, software analysis, vulnerability discovery, and dynamic security assessment; - Trustworthy certifiable hardware and software; - AI-based security services e.g. predictive security, advanced anomaly and intrusion detection, system health checks.

Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2024-cs-01-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	WB DIHs and its partners could work on a work package within a large project in collaboration with one of its partners. Universities and digital enablers included in the WB DIHs may find in this Call the opportunity to scale their developments and establish collaborations with leading entities.

Accelerating uptake through open proposals for advanced SME innovation	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL3-2024-SSRI-01-02
Type of action	Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	27 Jun 2024
Deadline date	20 Nov 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 6.00 million approx.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 1.5 million approx.
Call information	Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a mature technological solution addressing EU security policy priorities in the areas addressed by the Cluster 3 work programme; - Facilitated access to civil security market for small innovators; - Improved cooperation between public buyers and small supply market actors for a swifter uptake of innovation in response to short to mid-term needs; - Stronger partnerships between small and medium EU security industry and technology actors to ensure the sustainability of the EU innovation capacity in the civil security domain and reduce technological dependencies from non-EU suppliers in critical security areas.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2024-ssri-01-02
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	This call would be of particular interest to technology SMEs and representative entities of the business sector that are part of DIHs specializing in cybersecurity. It is a fairly open call for cybersecurity solutions (see topic for more details) and priorities the participation of SMEs.

3.2.3.3 Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space

The overarching vision behind the proposed investments under Cluster 4 is that of Europe shaping competitive and trusted technologies for a European industry with global leadership in key areas, enabling production and consumption to respect the boundaries of our planet, and maximising the benefits for all parts of society in the variety of social, economic and territorial contexts in Europe.

Efforts will aim to build a digital, low-carbon and circular industry, ensure sustainable supply of raw materials, develop advanced materials and provide the basis for advances and innovation in global challenges to society.

This cluster shares the most synergies with **WB DIHs**, although the calls of interest are currently closed. Taking into account the Work Programme 2023-2024 and its amendments (published in April 2024) with the last calls scheduled for 2024 or early 2025, we highlight some with potential alignment with **WB DIHs**. In addition, the WP 2025 would be published in early 2025, with (potentially) more calls of interest.

Advancing Large AI Models: Integration of New Data Modalities and Expansion of Capabilities (AI, Data and Robotics Partnership) Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL4-2024-HUMAN-03-01
Type of action	Research and Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	23 Apr 2024
Deadline date	18 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 50.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 25.00 million aprox.
Call information	Projects are expected to contribute to one or more of the following outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced applicability of large AI systems to new domains through the integration of innovative data modalities, such as sensor measurements (e.g. in robotics, IoT) or remote sensing (e.g. earth observation), as input. - Improvement of current multimodal large AI systems capabilities and expansion of the number of data modalities jointly handled by one AI system, leading to broader application potential and improved AI performance.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl4-2024-human-03-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	Interested WB DIHs members or RTOs in their ecosystems with expertise in AI and Robotic could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

Explainable and Robust AI (AI Data and Robotics Partnership) Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL4-2024-HUMAN-03-02
Type of action	Research and Innovation Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	23 Apr 2024
Deadline date	18 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 50.00 million aprox.

Expected Budget per project	EUR 7.50 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Projects are expected to contribute to one of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced robustness, performance and reliability of AI systems, including generative AI models, with awareness of the limits of operational robustness of the system. - Improved explainability and accountability, transparency and autonomy of AI systems, including generative AI models, along with an awareness of the working conditions of the system.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl4-2024-human-03-02
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	Interested WB DIHs members or RTOs in their ecosystems with expertise in AI and Robotic could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

Digital Humanism - Putting people at the centre of the digital transformation	
Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL4-2024-HUMAN-03-03
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	23 Apr 2024
Deadline date	18 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 1.50 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 1.50 million aprox.
Call information	<p>ExpectedOutcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an active network and cross disciplinary communities on digital humanism bringing together ICT experts, ethnologists, sociologists and experts in fundamental rights - Help defining and strengthening EU's approach to a human-centred digital transformation through cross-disciplinary, world class foundational and application oriented research - Formulate approaches how to transform and strengthen European standards (rule of law, social market economy, fundamental rights, social standards and social partnership) into the digital realm including the take up of those standards by digital actors and in particular those developing new digital environment (e.g. data scientists, start-ups, investors) - Formulate a list of recommendations and roadmaps to address current gaps or issues that are preventing the development of digital solutions that will reinforce - and not undermine - digital humanism across the society - Propose a concrete framework for measuring and promoting progress of the promotion and putting into practice of the digital rights and principles declaration in the context of the Digital Decade policy programme. This will include concrete indicators, source of information at economy and European level, as well as the identification of existing, and development of new, capacity tools to support the uptake of identified best practice uses of digital technologies in support of digital humanism. This work will notably feed the review of the Digital Decade Policy Programme and of the solemn declaration in 2026..

Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl4-2024-human-03-03
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	DIHs with an interest in digital humanism could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

Intellectual asset management support for public research organisations, academic institutions and their spin-offs Open for submission	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL4-2024-HUMAN-02-35
Type of action	Coordination and Support Actions
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	23 Apr 2024
Deadline date	10 Sep 2024
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 4.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 4.00 million aprox.
Call information	Proposals are expected to contribute to the following outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide support to public research organisations and their spin-offs in fostering a stronger culture of entrepreneurship, better managing their intellectual assets and facilitating their next step towards bringing their R&I results towards the market. - Build capacity in public research organisations and academic institutions by translating the guiding principles for knowledge valorisation on entrepreneurship into tangible guidance for early stage innovators. - Building stronger capabilities for intellectual asset management in academic institutions and public research organisations by using the Code of Practice on the management of intellectual assets and the Code of Practice on Standardisation to support early stage innovators to succeed with open innovation also in international cooperations.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl4-2024-human-02-35
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	DIHs with an interest in strengthening their entrepreneurship culture and spin-offs could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

3.2.3.4 Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility

This clusters aims to fight climate change by better understanding its causes, evolution, risks, impacts and opportunities, and by making the energy and transport sectors more climate and environment-friendly, more efficient and competitive, smarter, safer and more resilient.

Although the final objectives of this cluster are not aligned with the core priorities of **WB DIHs**, its partners could have the capacity to work on a cross-cutting project in which digitalisation

plays a relevant role. Taking into account the Work Programme 2023-2024 and its amendments (published in April 2024) with the last calls scheduled for 2024 or early 2025, Econet has identified these calls where there are possibilities for **WB DIHs** members to participate as partners:

Robotics and other automated solutions for construction, renovation and maintenance in a sustainable built environment (Built4People Partnership)	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL5-2024-D4-02-05
Type of action	Innovation Action
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	17 Sep 24
Deadline date	21 Jan 25
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 8.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 4.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of construction and renovation time on-site (at least 40% reduction). - Reduction of errors in construction and renovation works. - Improved resource efficiency. - Reduction of construction and renovation costs. - Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from, and improved energy efficiency of the works on-site. - Reduced environmental impact of construction works, including pollution, particulate matter[1] and noise, in the immediate vicinity. - Reduction of waste generated from the works on-site.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d4-02-02
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	The construction sector is one of the most active and necessary in the WB. Interested WB DIHs members with expertise in robotics could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

Digital tools for CSP and solar thermal plants	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL5-2024-D3-02-01
Type of action	Innovation Action
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	17 Sep 24
Deadline date	21 Jan 25
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 4.00 million aprox.

Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to some of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved performance of concentrated solar power (CSP) plants. - Improved performance of concentrated and/or non-concentrated solar thermal heat and/or cold plants. - Reduced operation and maintenance costs of CSP plants. - Reduced operation and maintenance costs of concentrated and/or non-concentrated solar thermal heat and/or cold plants. - Reinforced role of CSP plants in the power market. - Reduced greenhouse gas emissions. - Achievement of the CSP targets of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d3-02-01
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>Given the expertise of some members of the WB DIHs in ICT and green technologies, this call is included so that they can assess their participation as partners in projects.</p>

BIM-based processes and digital twins for facilitating and optimising circular energy renovation (Built4People Partnership)	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL5-2024-D4-02-03
Type of action	Innovation Action
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	17 Sep 24
Deadline date	21 Jan 25
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 8.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 4.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced buildings construction and renovation time and costs. - Increased buildings material reuse and recycling. - Improvement of buildings performance (energy, sustainability including whole life-cycle carbon and the potential to store carbon in built works, comfort, health and well-being, and accessibility). - Enhanced, interoperable and accessible buildings information across the lifecycle. - Improvement of interoperability with existing Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Digital Twin solutions. - Broader application of BIM and Digital Twin solutions, in particular within SMEs
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d4-02-03
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>The construction sector is one of the most active and necessary in the WB.</p>

	Interested WB DIHs members with expertise in digital twins could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals..
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AI for advanced and collective perception and decision making for CCAM applications (CCAM Partnership)	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL5-2024-D6-01-04
Type of action	Innovation Action
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	17 Sep 24
Deadline date	21 Jan 25
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 6.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approaches for resilient collective awareness, which can eventually be used in e.g. complex models of collective behaviour. - Advanced collective awareness, decision making and triggering of actions for CCAM applications, enabled by new concepts and tools built on advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Hybrid Intelligence (HI). - CCAM solutions evolving from reactive into predictive system state awareness (including driver state and road user diversity), decision making and actuation, enhancing road safety. - Understanding of AI-related ethical issues and user needs, together with capabilities, limitations and potential conflicts of AI based systems for CCAM, including a definition and a measure of human-like control. - Increased user acceptability and societal benefit of CCAM solutions, based on explainable, trustworthy and human-centric AI. Interactions with AI-based vehicles are understandable, human-like and reflect human psychological capabilities.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d6-01-04
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	Given the expertise of some members of the Western Balkans DIHs in ICT and mobility, this call is included so that they can assess their participation as partners in projects..

Digital solutions to foster participative design, planning and management of buildings, neighbourhoods and urban districts (Built4People Partnership)	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
ID	HORIZON-CL5-2024-D4-02-05
Type of action	Innovation Action
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	17 Sep 24

Deadline date	21 Jan 25
Indicative Budget for topic	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.00 million aprox.
Expected Budget per project	EUR 5.00 million aprox.
Call information	<p>Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater engagement of representative groups of end users as well as citizens of the impacted urban context. - Increased acceptability and uptake of sustainable deep renovation solutions in the built environment. - Reduced energy and mobility poverty. - Increase in plans for climate neutral and sustainable, aesthetic and inclusive built environments with enhanced climate adaptation and resilience (e.g. based on nature-based solutions). - Enhanced climate change adaptation and resilience in built environments.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d4-02-05
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	The construction sector is one of the most active and necessary in the WB. Interested WB DIHs members with expertise in smart cities could consider joining consortia that are maturing their proposals.

ECONET RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS



Econet advises **WB DIHs** to take on the role of coordinator when submitting proposals for **Hop-On Facility and Widera topics** because EC is expecting to finance entities coming from the WB.

Other topics to be prioritized are the ones within **the EIE Work Programme** such as the Expanding Academia-Enterprise Collaborations call because as it was mentioned, projects to be submitted need to balance consortium including members from emerging economies which is the status of the WB DIHs regions.

For other calls, the general recommendation is for both **WB DIHs** and its members to participate as partners. It's crucial to recognize that such participation can bolster their Curriculum Vitae (CV) and augment their visibility within the programme:

1. Follow the updates of the new "Funding and tenders" portal and use its tools to search for potential partners: [link](#)
2. Participate in events and Infodays organized at EU level, especially those one with matchmaking and pitches in order to positioning as partners.
3. Identify the National Contact Points (NCPs) of Horizon Europe in your territory. They can offer guidance, from proposal development to networking opportunities. Find them here: [link](#)
4. Express your interest by signing up on the EEN network platform via the [personalised registration alert & follow the registration steps mentioned](#).
5. Search EEN global partnership database based on different criteria (<https://een.ec.europa.eu/partnering-opportunities>)
6. Get in touch with the local node and participate in the activities organized at regional level. The Annex provides a list of EEN contact points.

The NCP_WIDERA.NET project partners have launched a **travel grants programme to support participation of applicants from Widening countries to Pillar II clusters and European partnerships brokerage events organised on-site**. The Annex provides further information about this possibility (WB eligible: Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia).

Check further information: <https://www.ncpwideranet.eu/travel-grants/>

some calls with a specific focus on entities in the Western Balkans, such as the Policy Answers or Reinforcing calls.

Econet select some opportunities that are considering interesting for WB DIHs at the moment:

2nd REINFORCING Open Call - Incubators Call on Balkans Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	27 Mar 2024
Deadline date 1	30 May 2024
Budget for Call	480 000 €
Expected Budget per project	For this Incubator call, selected projects, lasting 12 months, will be supported with grants of up to 60 000 euros for each consortium. Selected projects will start all together on 1st September 2024 and end up on 31st August 2025.
Call information	<p>Three specific challenges have been identified for this 2nd REINFORCING Open Call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting a better ORRI understanding as well as supporting researchers with envisaging ORRI components they could implement / strengthen within their activities (Bottom-up approach). Proposed specific activities will result in empowering the institutions' research staff in comprehending and implementing the meaning and importance of ORRI, in order for the staff to conduct research endeavours which are aligned with societal needs (impact-driven). - Developing enabling conditions at institutional level which could motivate / support researchers to practise more ORRI (Supportive top-down approach). Proposed activities will enable applying organisations to effectively incentivize and streamline open and responsible research and innovation activities within themselves, which will result in institutional support for in-house activities that have societal impact. Thus, the organisations at the institutional and managerial levels will be empowered to actively inspire and support their research staff in conducting research that is aligned with societal needs. - Strengthening relationship within R&I ecosystems, building bridges between researchers and other actors (e.g., private sector, civil society, policy makers, etc.) Proposals to this challenge aim to open the applying institution towards other societal actors in the local ecosystem, thus making the organisational boundaries permeable, are related to this challenge. These projects should result in means of enabling or strengthening collaboration and co-creation with external partners such as companies, other research organisations, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, and policy makers during the research and innovation processes. <p>Applicants may apply for one or more of the challenges or address other specific topics for which they have identified a gap in introducing ORRI.</p> <p>This call is open to consortia composed of, at least, 2 entities based in EU Member States (including their outermost regions) or associated countries to Horizon Europe. At least one of the entities should be based or operating in the Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North</p>

	Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia) and should be the main beneficiary with most of the activities conducted at its premises.
Further information	https://www.reinforcing.eu/open-calls/open-calls

PolicyAnswers Western Balkans Researchers Mobility Scheme Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	28 Mar 2024
Deadline date 1	31 May 2024
Budget for Call	100 000 €
Expected Budget per project	<p>The financial support for each selected project will be provided as a grant of 5000 euros maximum. The funding will be non-refundable grant to cover these eligible costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an "allowance unit cost" of 75 euros per day of the stay (up to 2 250 euros per month - 30 days-) to compensate for all travel costs and living allowances of the recipient (including cost for visa etc.); - any cost that occurs at the host institution like accession fees, consumables etc.; - costs for exploitation of project results (visibility, publication of scientific article, etc.); <p>The overall duration of the project must be between two weeks and six months, which allows enough time for the exploitation of the results of the mobility. During the project several visits to the same RI are eligible, but not to a different RI in the same or in another WB economy.</p>
Call information	<p>This call will select and support proposals which use short-term mobility within the WB and specialised equipment or facilities (research infrastructures) in another WB economy in order to do research. Only mobility projects in the field of research will be funded.</p> <p>Mobility must comprise the physical presence of an early-career researcher – as the recipient of the financial support – for a duration of between two weeks and two months at a location in a different WB economy, that allows access to a research infrastructure.</p> <p>This call is only open to early-career researchers (ECR) affiliated to a research institution from one of the six Western Balkan economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia).</p>
Further information	https://ptoutline.eu/app/wbms

MASTER: 1st Open Call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	18 Mar 2024
Deadline date 1	31 May 2024

Budget for Call	2 400 000 €
Expected Budget per project	<p>Selected proposals might get financial support up to 100 000 euros (for proposals by a single SME) or up to 150 000 euros (for microconsortia of at least 2 partners) to integrate applicants' XR technology in the MASTER platform and test it with a wide range of end-users. The funding rate will be 50% for large companies and 100% for everyone else.</p> <p>Partners from the MASTER consortium will provide technical mentoring to each experiment during the whole execution period (9 months, including both the development of technologies and their integration with the MASTER-XR platform). The last 4 months will include the technical validation of the results.</p>
Call information	<p>The open call targets technology developers in XR (companies), Research Institutes in the field of XR technologies and Educational Organisations established in EU Member States (including the Overseas Countries and Territories linked to them) or in countries associated to Horizon Europe.</p> <p>Applicants can submit their proposals as a micro-consortium, but they must include at least 1 SME, which should always be the coordinator.</p> <p>The objective of this call is to attract the best candidates able to provide innovative technologies to create rich XR experiences and validate the platform and technologies developed in the project with students (schools or professional training services).</p> <p>The challenges that can be addressed by proposals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety and ergonomics in workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o TC 1: "Integrating machine learning methods to VR tools towards accurate layout planning and validation", o TC 2: "XR-based environment for ergonomics training methods to evaluate and best-practices suggestion", o TC 3: "Real-time visualization of safety-related information in XR environment to increase operators' safety awareness", o TC 4: "Open challenge related to improved working conditions in the workplace". - Intuitive robot programming, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o TC 5: "XR-based system to program on demand tasks to stationary robots" o TC 6: "XR-based programming of mobile robots for intralogistics operations" o TC 7: "Intuitive XR-based robot programming for assembly and packaging tasks" o TC 8: "Any challenge related to Intuitive robot programming of manufacturing operations" - User-friendly HRI methods. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o TC 9: "Interaction systems in multi-player virtual environments" o TC 10: "Advanced multi-modal (i.e. voice, gesture, gaze) interaction system" o TC 12: "Interactive system to unlock accessibility capabilities in the XR environment" o TC 13: "Open challenge related to user-friendly HRI methods in the workplace".
Further information	https://www.master-xr.eu/open-calls/

NGI Zero Commons Fund - 2nd Call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	1 Apr 2024
Deadline date 1	1 Jun 2024
Expected Budget per project	<p>The fund will select and fund proposals between 5.000 and 50.000 euro, with the possibility to scale them up significantly if there is proven potential, that bring new ideas and disruptive technologies, while at the same time evolving and growing existing technologies that are still future-proof. The key objective is to deliver potential break-through contributions to the open internet.</p> <p>The following types of activities qualify for financial support, provided they are cost effective and have a clear link to the topics directly relevant to digital commons and the objectives set out in the NGI0 Commons Fund call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scientific research, - design and development of open source software and open hardware, - validation or constructive inquiry into existing or novel technical solutions, - software engineering aimed at adapting to new usage areas or improving software quality, - formal security proofs, security audits, setup and design of software testing and continuous integration, - documentation for researchers, developers and end users, including educational materials, - standardisation activities, including membership fees of standards bodies, - understanding user requirements and improving usability/inclusive design, - necessary measures in support of (broad)er deployability, e.g. packaging, - participation in technical, developer and community events like hackathons, IETF, W3C, RIPE meetings, FOSDEM, etc. (admission fee, travel and subsistence costs), - other activities that are relevant to adhering to robust software development and deployment practices, - project management, and - out-of-pocket costs for infrastructure essential to achieving the above. <p>Project proposals should be in line with the NGI vision and should have research and development as their primary objective.</p> <p>The expected duration of participation is flexible (might range from 1 to 12 months).</p>
Call information	<p>Anyone can apply, including private individuals and organisations of any type.</p> <p>Given equal proposals, inhabitants of the EU and countries associated to Horizon Europe are given priority. However, if the project is of exceptional quality and the proposer holds unique technical expertise proposals from outside of those geographic areas can be eligible as well - under the condition that there is a clear European dimension.</p>
Further information	https://nlnet.nl/commonsfund/

NGI Mobifree 2nd open call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	1 Apr 2024
Deadline date 1	1 Jun 2024
Expected Budget per project	<p>This call will select and support project proposals, between 5 000 and 50 000 euros, for solutions that give European citizens and organizations more choice in, and access to, human-centered and ethical mobile software.</p> <p>The following types of activities qualify for financial support, provided they are cost effective and have a clear link to the topics directly relevant to Mobifree and the objectives set out in the call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scientific research, - design and development of free and open source software and open hardware, - validation or constructive inquiry into existing or novel technical solutions, - software engineering aimed at adapting to new usage areas or improving software quality, - formal security proofs, security audits, setup and design of software testing and continuous integration, - documentation for researchers, developers and end users, including educational materials, - standardisation activities, including membership fees of standards bodies, - understanding user requirements and improving usability/inclusive design, - necessary measures in support of (broad)er deployability, e.g. packaging - participation in technical, developer and community events like hackathons, IETF, W3C, RIPE meetings, FOSDEM, etc. (admission fee, travel and subsistence costs), - other activities that are relevant to adhering to robust software development and deployment practices, - project management, and - out-of-pocket costs for infrastructure essential to achieving the above. <p>A single proposal MAY request a grant allocation up to 50 000 euros.</p>
Call information	<p>Anyone can apply, including private individuals and organisations of any type. Given equal proposals, inhabitants of the EU and countries associated to Horizon Europe are given priority. However if the project is of exceptional quality and the proposer holds unique technical expertise proposals from outside of those geographic areas can be eligible as well - under the condition that there is a clear European dimension.</p>
Further information	https://nlnet.nl/commonsfund/

XR2Industry Open Call for Hardware Enablers Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage

Publication Date	02 Apr 2024
Deadline date 1	04 Jun 2024
Budget for Call	1.600.000 €
Expected Budget per project	Each selected company will receive a maximum of 500 000 euros (fixed lump sum) during 15 months.
Call information	<p>The XR2Industry 1st Open Call for Hardware enablers will select proposals aimed at integrating emerging technologies (such as 5G/6G, IoT, data, artificial intelligence, edge and cloud computing, and microelectronics) to enable possibilities of XR experiences. The proposals will have to focus on solving one of the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External 5G Modem - Biometric Human Sensing - External ToF Camera - Haptic Gloves for XR standalone headsets supporting OpenXR - Universal Tracker - Hard hat with the front of the HMD - High-Accuracy GPS - Motion capture system to track several objects - External HDR camera - Overhear audio with hearing protection - Interaction device that fits disabled people. <p>The requested Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of the solution is defined from initial 3 to 7.</p>
Further information	https://xr2industry.fundingbox.com/

VOXReality Open Call Open for submission	
Type of action	Other opportunities: Innovation Vouchers
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	5 Apr 2024
Deadline date 1	5 Jun 2024
Budget for Call	1 000 000 €
Expected Budget per project	<p>Selected proposals will receive funding up to 200 000 euros and VOXReality will provide developer tools for natural language processing and models (all the AI models will be publicly shared at Hugging Face), along with APIs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Automatic Speech Recognition and Neural Machine Translation: Empowering seamless communication across the consortium languages (English, Dutch, German, Spanish, Italian, and Greek) through audio and text translation, including contextual understanding and terminology adaptation. - Visual Language Models: Enabling comprehensive spatial understanding and interaction with RGB images, including scene description, question answering, and image captioning. - Conversation Agents: Facilitating intuitive interactions with XR environments through intent recognition, navigation assistance, and program-related information retrieval.

	<p>The VOXReality consortium will provide guidelines and technical support in engineering integration, testing and validation to support the development of the projects. value-added tax. The recipient of the voucher is obliged to co-finance the remaining amount of the total costs of the service, which is at least 20% of the total amount of the invoice, including VAT of the total costs.</p> <p>The Innovation Vouchers must be used by the recipient within a period of up to 9 months (since formal awarding).</p>
<p>Call information</p>	<p>The goal of this call is to integrate VOXReality models into new XR applications, thus advancing immersive experiences across various sectors.</p> <p>Proposals must address one of the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge 1: Integration Challenge (Integration of VOXReality models to new XR applications). Applicants are expected to use the VOXReality models/services/tools in order to develop new XR applications, such as developing new use cases for additional sectors or developing new types of applications for the sectors VOXReality consortium is focusing on (conference, theatre, training). - Challenge: Extension Challenge (extension of the VOXReality models / tools). The applicants are expected to extend the VOXReality models, in terms of new languages and/or directions, further training of the models to achieve better results, or adaptation of the models to new tasks. - Challenge 3: Full-cycle Challenge (full-cycle challenge to both extend the VOXReality models and integrate them into new XR applications). The applicants are expected to both extend the VOXReality models in terms of new languages and/or directions, new tasks and better results and present the performance of the new models in a new XR application.
<p>Further information</p>	<p>https://voxreality.eu/open-call/</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">PolicyAnswers Western Balkans Innovation Voucher Open for submission</p>	
<p>Type of action</p>	<p>Open Call – Cascade Funding</p>
<p>Deadline model</p>	<p>single stage</p>
<p>Publication Date</p>	<p>12 Apr 2024</p>
<p>Deadline date 1</p>	<p>26 Jun 2024</p>
<p>Budget for Call</p>	<p>240 000 €</p>
<p>Expected Budget per project</p>	<p>A single voucher can cover up to a maximum of 80% of the total costs of a service provided by academia or research and technology organizations, up to an amount of 8 000 euros excluding value-added tax . The recipient of the voucher is obliged to co-finance the remaining amount of the total costs of the service, which is at least 20% of the total amount of the invoice, including VAT of the total costs.</p> <p>The Innovation Vouchers must be used by the recipient within a period of up to 9 months (since formal awarding).</p>
<p>Call information</p>	<p>This call for "Western Balkans Innovation Vouchers" scheme is only open to legal business entity registered as a micro, small or medium-sized company and registered in any of the WB economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia).</p> <p>Applicants must collaborate with a service provider, where the applicant and the service provider must be from two different WB economies. Eligible entities are: the public sector Higher Education Institutions, public sector R&D organisations (at</p>

Further information	<p>least 51% directly or indirectly state-owned) or companies predominantly owned by those (50.1% or more), registered in any of the WB economies.</p> <p>The Western Balkans Innovation Vouchers (IV) are a simple direct financial incentive used by companies to cover part of the costs of the services provided by research and development (R&D) organisations, thus intensifying the volume and dynamics of the development of products and services as well as their placement on the market.</p> <p>This vouchers can be used to transfer scientific, technological or innovative knowledge that is new to the company or to solve a technical/technological problem that will be identified by the company. Funds can be obtained for the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of new or improvement (in terms of function and quality) of existing products, processes or services; - Proof of concept; - Feasibility study; - Production of laboratory prototypes; - Manufacturing demonstrational prototypes; - Different types of tests (in laboratory, production plant); - Validation of technology; - Validation of new or improved products, processes or services; - Development and introduction of special software for a product or process (within the product development); - IPR and technology transfer.
Further information	<p>https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/calls/western-balkans-innovation-voucher-scheme/</p>

COROB open call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	08 Apr 2024
Deadline date 1	08 Jul 2024
Budget for Call	2.000.000 €
Expected Budget per project	<p>Selected entities will get a fixed lump sum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - up to 150 000 euros per entity for Solutions to Challenges (1st Funding Instrument), and - up to 100 000 euros per entity for Experiments for Enabling technologies for digital services (2nd Funding Instrument). <p>SMEs will be funded at a reimbursement rate of 70% of their eligible costs and Start-ups at 100%. Selected entities other than SMEs and start-ups will not be funded but will receive technical support from the COROB project.</p> <p>Additionally, selected applicants will be invited to join a support programme to demonstrate the added value of their solutions addressed in the challenges of the use-cases. In the case of the Solutions to challenges(1st funding instrument), it's a 12-month programme structured in 3 stages: Stage 1 "Individual Mentoring Plan", Stage 2 "Solution development" and Stage 3 "Solution Validation". In the case of the Experiments for Enabling technologies for digital service (2nd funding instrument),</p>

	support will span for 9 months and 3 stages: Stage 1 "Individual Mentoring Plan", Stage 2 "Digital service development" and Stage 3 "Digital service validation".
Call information	<p>This call will select and support proposals to integrate and test innovative technologies to provide physical products on top of the project use-cases and integrating and testing innovative enabling technology to provide a digital development for arc welding-based manufacturing processes. It includes two funding instruments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st Funding Instrument: "Solutions to challenges" to fund technology providers aimed to develop technical solutions covering the use cases challenges, to be further integrated and validated in the project use-cases and - 2nd Funding Instrument: "Experiments for Enabling technologies for digital services" to fund technology providers aimed to develop digital services answering to the challenges and applicable in the use case areas and interoperable with the data acquisition platform of COROB.
Further information	https://www.corob-project.eu/open-calls/

Foodity 2nd Open Call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	8 May 2024
Deadline date 1	10 July 2024
Budget for Call	1.000.000 €
Expected Budget per project	Selected proposals will get value-added services (e.g. one-to-one mentoring, training on technical, business, and legal matters. and technical and financial support (up to 187.500euros per beneficiary. for developing their pilots.
Call information	<p>The main goal of FOODITY is to create a European ecosystem of digital solutions that contributes to a more sustainable and healthy food and nutrition system - respecting citizens' rights to personal data sovereignty.</p> <p>Proposals should provide novel solutions to existing research and technical challenges to achieve the four Food 2030 key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nutrition for sustainable and healthy diets, - Food systems supporting a healthy planet, - Circularity and resource efficiency; and - Innovation and empowering communities. <p>Eligible beneficiaries will be research and technology organisations (RTOs. and universities, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs., social innovation actors and training organisations.</p>
Further information	https://foodity.eu/open-calls/

Nephele 2nd open call Forthcoming	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage

Publication Date	Aug 2024
Deadline date 1	Sept 2024
Budget for Call	Not available
Expected Budget per project	Selected proposals will get access to a 6-months support programme and funding up to 110 000 euros per beneficiary.
Call information	<p>NEPHELE enables the efficient, reliable and secure end-to-end orchestration of hyper-distributed applications over programmable infrastructure that is spanning across the compute continuum, removing existing openness and interoperability barriers in the convergence of IoT technologies against cloud and edge computing orchestration platforms.</p> <p>The NEPHELE outcomes are going to be demonstrated, validated and evaluated in a set of use cases across various vertical industries, including areas such as disaster management, logistic operations in ports, energy management in smart buildings and remote healthcare services.</p> <p>Two successive open calls will also take place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st Open Call targeting up to 8 entities to develop Virtual Objects, Composite Virtual Objects (including the Digital Twin concept), and generic IoT enablers. - 2nd Open Call targeting up to 8 entities to validate the architectural approach & synergetic meta-orchestration framework. <p>This call will select and support proposals for the development of Virtual Objects, Composite Virtual Objects and generic IoT enablers.</p>
Further information	https://nephele-project.eu/

Indusac open call for students and researchers Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	18 Dec 2023
Deadline date 1	30/05/2024, 30/10/2024
Budget for Call	€ 900.000
Expected Budget per project	<p>INDUSAC aims to financially support short-term (4-8 weeks) research collaborations between academia (students and researchers) and industry (companies), in solving company Challenges. Financial support to third parties (FSTP) is given solely to student members of the co-creation teams.</p> <p>The INDUSAC project focuses on four areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circularity, - General Sustainability, - Digitalisation, and - Industry 4.0. <p>Maximum funding is up to 3 000 euros gross per co-creation team (up to 1 000 euros gross per student and up to 3 000 euros gross per co-creation team wherein only students are eligible for funding;</p> <p>The duration of the co-creation project is expected to be between 4 to 8 weeks.</p>
Call information	The call targets co-creation teams composed by students and researchers.

Further information	<p>Students must study at public universities during the entire duration of the activity (from the co-creation team establishment until one month after the final report of the co-creation team is confirmed) and researchers must be employed at a public research organisation during the entire duration of the activity (from the co-creation team establishment until one month after the final report of the co-creation team is confirmed). An individual student or researcher will be able to participate in more than one co-creation team but be a candidate with a maximum of three Motivation Letters.</p> <p>The co-creation team must have at least 3 and up to 6 members and the team members must be from at least three different EU Member States or Associated Countries.</p> <p>The co-creation team has to be gender balanced (operationally, gender balance entails selecting at least two different gender options) and must include at least one student (i.e. no co-creation team may comprise exclusively researchers).</p> <p>Students and researchers in each co-creation team must come from EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden), in particular Widening countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia; source) or Associated Countries (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Morocco, UK), as indicated by their citizenship or residency.</p> <p>At least 60% of the members of the co-creation team must be from Widening Countries.</p>
Further information	<p>https://indusac.eu/open-call-for-students-researchers/</p>

dAIEDge 1st open call for the Exchange Programme	
Forthcoming	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	29 Aug 2024
Deadline date 1	31 Oct 2024
Budget for Call	Not available
Expected Budget per project	<p>It will finance mobility and costs of living for individuals (researchers, PhD students) to spend time in another research centre or company (up to 60 000 euros).</p> <p>The result of the programme should lead to a common scientific publication between the beneficiary and the hosting institution.</p> <p>The duration of the exchange is up to 6-7 months.</p>
Call information	<p>The dAIEDGE Network of Excellence (NoE) seeks to strengthen and support the development of a dynamic European cutting-edge AI ecosystem under the umbrella of the European Lighthouse for AI, and to sustain the development of advanced AI.</p> <p>The Exchange Programme will select and support research visits to a hosting organisation within dAIEDge members in order to perform common research that lead to significant advances.</p>
Further information	<p>https://daiedge-1oc.fundingbox.com/</p>

TALOS 1st open call	
Forthcoming	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	30 Sep 2024
Deadline date 1	3 Dec 2024
Budget for Call	Not available
Expected Budget per project	Selected applicants will be funded up to 200 000 euros per beneficiary and will be invited to join a 9-month support programme with expertise in engineering integration, testing and validation to support the selected SMEs and start-ups to demonstrate the added value of their solutions to address the challenges of the use-cases.
Call information	TALOS aims to develop robotics, AI and data solutions, showcasing their prowess across various photovoltaic (PV) energy applications. This call will select and support proposals for the development of robotics, AI and data solutions in order to address the challenges defined for the 3 use case scenarios to be executed within TALOS Project (land-based PV, floating PV, AgriPV).
Further information	https://talos-oc.fundingbox.com/

RESIST - International travel FSTP	
Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	10 Jul 2023
Deadline date 1	20 Dec 2024
Budget for Call	€ 30 000
Expected Budget per project	The financial support will be up to €2,000 per SME (one person maximum per applicant and service). Beneficiaries should use the international travel FSTP maximum 6 months after they obtain it. The activities to be supported by the open call cannot exceed one week (5 days).
Call information	This call targets European SMEs, start-ups and very-small businesses (VSBs), established in one of the countries associated with the Single Market Programme and working in the Mobility, Transport and Automotive (MTA. Ecosystem Financial support provided by this call will support participation in internationalisation acceleration activities organised in non-EU third countries. These internationalisation acceleration activities should facilitate the participation of applicants in different kinds of non-EU third countries events, so they can enter new markets, discover technological solutions for their needs, exchange best practices and experiences, identify potential partners, as well as meet new customers or suppliers. The participation in these activities will allow applicants to obtain valuable information for their green and digital transition, together with greater visibility in the Mobility, Transport and Automotive ecosystem, contributing to improve and extend their business and collaboration opportunities and increase their level of resilience. Eligible activities for International Travel FSTP: - Attend conferences in a target market

Further information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend trade fairs in a target market - Attend exhibitions in a target market - Attend in-person trainings or events on internationalisation - Participate in an in-person matchmaking events - Bilateral meetings with potential customers or suppliers (B2B, B2C, C2C). <p>Booth fees at conferences or exhibitions are not eligible for funding. In addition, internal events organised in the framework of the RESIST Eurocluster initiative will also be out of the scope of this call. Activities taking place in the following target countries: Mexico, the United States of America, Canada, China, North Africa (especially Morocco, and the United Kingdom will be encouraged.</p>
Further information	https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/resist-internationalisation/

GEMSTONE - TRAIN call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	15 Jun 2023
Deadline date 1	31/08/2024, 31/10/2024, 31/12/2024
Budget for Call	€ 90 000
Expected Budget per project	The awarded projects will receive up to 2 000 euros in the form of a lump sum and have to be implemented in the proposed timeframe at the application stage, i.e. max. 2 months after the SGA is signed.
Call information	<p>Two categories are eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value, behaviour, normative skills (values related to responsibility, future, environment, justice, solidarity and tolerance, e.g. environmental awareness. Skills that will allow trainees to better understand the framework of Green Manufacturing and to have a more thorough knowledge of the challenges and impacts. - Technical occupational competences (vocational and technical skills related to technology, emerging products and services. Occupation-specific skills that are related to the particular challenges of a certain job. <p>Applicants must have identified the training services before presenting their application to the call. Training services can address either upskilling or reskilling. The eligible activities can take the form of individual or group activities. They can be attended online or physically. Training service providers should be established in EU or Horizon Europe countries.</p> <p>The call is open to manufacturing, technology and solution providers SMEs, and in particular industrial equipment and tool providers, which are located in an EU member state or in one of the Single Market Programme (SMP. associated countries, including Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia)</p> <p>The project targets manufacturing SMEs active in the following 5 industrial sectors: Aeronautics/Defence, Energy, Mobility, Agriculture/Agrifood, Materials. However, SMEs involved in other manufacturing sectors and working on Green Manufacturing challenges are also eligible.</p> <p>The GEMSTONE financial support must be used by the applicant as support to purchase services related to "green skills", i.e. technical knowledge and skills that enable professionals to effectively use green technologies and processes and</p>

	transversal skills, as well as knowledge, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient manufacturing industry. The training to be carried out must have:
Further information	https://projectgemstone.eu/#services

GEMSTONE - EXPLORE call Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	15 Jun 2023
Deadline date 1	31/08/2024, 31/10/2024, 31/12/2024
Budget for Call	€ 60 000
Expected Budget per project	<p>The call is open to manufacturing, technology and solution providers SMEs, and in particular industrial equipment and tool providers, which are located in an EU member state or in one of the Single Market Programme (SMP. associated countries, including Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia)</p> <p>The GEMSTONE financial support must be used by the applicant as support to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in trade fairs/international events for companies providing services, technologies, solutions linked to green transition and green manufacturing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Market exploration; o Branding, sales and marketing of company; o Demonstrate their solutions/technologies (e.g., booth visitations and exhibitions.; o Sharing knowledge, experience and information in Green Manufacturing specific areas; - Participation in trade fairs/international, events study visits or learning mission having a specific focus on Green manufacturing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To gain knowledge, explore Green Manufacturing existing solutions; o To attend B2B events, o To do networking activities, identification of new partners and creation of new business opportunities; o To support project development, innovation and research and development. <p>Applicants must have identified the event before presenting their application to the call. The targeted events must be organised outside EU-member states, with specific attention brought in the targeted strategic areas defined in the call and the GEMSTONE roadmap. This is, North America (Canada and USA., Japan, and ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia.</p>
Call information	<p>Selected SMEs will receive €1.500 to implement their EXPLORE projects.</p> <p>The awarded projects have to be implemented in the proposed timeframe at the application stage, i.e. max. 2 months after the SGA is signed.</p>
Further information	https://projectgemstone.eu/#services

AI_REDGIO5 2nd call for third-parties support	
Forthcoming	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	1 Oct 2024
Deadline date 1	1 Feb 2025
Budget for Call	1.200.000 €
Expected Budget per project	SMEs or for-profit entities will be funded 70% of their respective eligible cost, while non-profit organizations may receive funding 100% of their cost. The eligible costs are related to personnel, subcontracting and indirect costs. The maximum amount allowed per proposal will be 60 000 euros
Call information	The overall objective of AI REDGIO 5.0 project is to enable competitive AI-at-the-Edge digital transformation of Industry 5.0 Manufacturing SMEs. All successful applicants will benefit from AI REDGIO 5.0 unique ecosystem and will find complementary funding for the full implementation of their experiments.
Further information	https://www.airedgio5-0.eu/open-calls

INGENIOUS Training Grants	
Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	22 May 2023
Deadline date 1	14 Feb 2025
Budget for Call	€ 25.000
Expected Budget per project	INGENIOUS is offering 100 training grants each worth € 250, to help SMEs improve their digital skills, green transition, resilience preparedness and reskilling and upskilling of the workforce.
Call information	The INGENIOUS Euroclusters project fosters SMEs operated in energy intensive industry to develop innovative projects. The INGENIOUS Training Grants will serve to expand the knowledge and skills of SMEs that want to stay competitive. The call is open to SME which are established in EU Member States, EEA countries or countries associated to the COSME part of the Single Market Programme (or in negotiations to be associated), including including Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia
Further information	https://clustercollaboration.eu/content/ingenious-internationalisation-grants

EEN2EIC - Voucher for Local Nodes	
Open for submission	
Type of action	Open Call – Cascade Funding
Deadline model	single stage
Publication Date	24 Jan 2023
Deadline date 1	31 Mar 2025

Budget for Call	The total budget available for FSTP in EEN2EIC (including not only this call, but all of them) is 5 135 646. 40 euros
Expected Budget per project	Local Nodes selected might get up to 3.700 euros per each eligible company that they support in the EIC application process. The Vouchers are divided as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.300euros for the support of eligible companies applying for EIC Short Proposal (EEN2EIC Group A Voucher). - 2.700euros for the support of eligible companies applying for EIC Full Proposal (EEN2EIC Group B Voucher).
Call information	The EEN2EIC aims to establish a stronger cooperation mechanism between the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and the European Innovation Council (EIC), supporting innovation and business scaling-up through financial support. The objective is to empower EEN network offices to support potential EIC applicants with the overall goal of increasing the number of high-quality proposals to the EIC. This call aims at providing support Vouchers to EEN Local Nodes to support submission of proposal under the EIC Accelerator programme from the project's target groups, namely SMEs established in widening and associated Countries and Women-Led SMEs established in all Countries eligible under EIC programme.
Further information	https://een2eic.eu/apply/call2/

ECONET RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS



1. Periodically check the EC portal for opportunities. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/competitive-calls>
2. We also invite you to register to OnePass (<https://getonepass.eu/>), a recently launched tool by FBOX where WB DIHs can identify calls of interest, apply and much more from one place.

3.4 DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

The Digital Europe Programme aims to accelerate economic recovery and drive the digital transformation of Europe by boosting investments in 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 €7.6 billion (in current prices), its goal is to improve Europe's competitiveness in the global digital economy and increase its technological autonomy, bringing benefits to everyone, but in particular to small and medium-sized enterprises.

The **economies of the Western Balkans are currently associated to the objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the Digital Europe Programme.**

In particular, participants from these economies will be able to take part in projects that deploy digital technologies across the EU in specific areas such as artificial intelligence, and advanced digital skills. They will also be able to obtain funding to become European Digital Innovation Hubs in their own regions, through the (recently closed) call *European Digital Innovation Hubs Network - Associated Countries*, in which pre-selected DIHs from Albania, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia had the opportunity to participate. In this regard, it is expected that Bosnia and Herzegovina will be able to participate in the call in the near future, yet to be announced.

DIGITAL Programme priorities are:

- 1) Supercomputing €2.2 billion to:
 - Build up and strengthen the EU's supercomputing and data processing capacities by buying world-class exascale supercomputers by 2022/2023 and post exascale facilities by 2026/2027.
 - Increase accessibility and broaden the use of supercomputing in areas of public interest such as health, environment and security, and in industry, including small and medium-sized enterprises.
- 2) Artificial intelligence €2.1 billion to:
 - Invest in and open up the use of artificial intelligence by businesses and public administrations.
 - Set up a true European data space and facilitate safe access to and storage of large datasets and trustworthy and energy-efficient cloud infrastructure.
 - Strengthen and support existing artificial intelligence testing and experimentation facilities in areas such as health and mobility in Member States and encourage their cooperation.
- 3) Cybersecurity €1.6 billion to:
 - Strengthening cybersecurity coordination between Member States tools and data infrastructures.
 - Support the wide deployment of cybersecurity capacities across the economy.
- 4) Advanced digital skills €580 million to:
 - Support the design and delivery of specialized programmes and traineeships for the future experts in key capacity areas like data and AI, cybersecurity, quantum and HPC.

- Support the upskilling of the existing workforce through short trainings reflecting the latest developments in key capacity areas.
- 5) Ensuring the wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society €1.1 billion to:
- Support high impact deployments in areas of public interest, such as health (complemented by EU4Health programme), Green Deal, smart communities and the cultural sector.
 - Build up and strengthen the network of European Digital Innovation Hubs, aiming to have a Hub in every region, to help companies benefit from digital opportunities.
 - **Support the uptake of advanced digital and related technologies by the industry, notably small and medium-sized enterprises.**

Below is a table with the main characteristics of a call that has been key to shaping the current map of European Digital Innovation Hubs, and where the Hubs based in BiH will be able to participate once the new call is launched.

Also, the currently open calls can be consulted at the following [link](#), although a priori none of general interest for **WB DIHs** has been identified. In any case, one call is highlighted that could be aligned with DIHs in the health sector.

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network - Associated Countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina)	
Forthcoming	
Programme	DIGITAL PROGRAMME
Type of action	Simple Grants — 50% funding rate
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	Not available yet (Early 2025)
Deadline date	Not available yet
Expected Budget per project	between EUR 1 000 000 and EUR 3 000 000 per project.
Call information	Upgrade EDIH 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.
Further information	https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/edihs
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>This is the most important call for DIHs aspiring to fund their transformation into European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) and align with the wider European digital network.</p> <p>It is recommended to initiate your preparations now. Iterate your proposal, seek feedback, and perfect it well ahead of the submission deadline.</p> <p>At FundingBox, we've had the privilege of supporting 11 DIHs in their application process for the 2022 EDIH network call. With a success rate of 73%, our experience and best practices from this endeavor can be leveraged to increase the chances of success in the forthcoming call.</p>

Support for Health Data Access Bodies to foster efficient pathways for AI in healthcare Open for submission	
Programme	DIGITAL PROGRAMME
Type of action	Simple Grants — 50% funding rate
Deadline model	Single-stage
Opening date	29 February 2024
Deadline date	29 May 2024
Expected Budget per project	3.25 M €.
Call information	<p>Expected Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on the identified pathways for testing and deployment of AI in health and their limitations and gaps in the current landscape; - Description of pathways based on health data access bodies' services and other key actors such as TEFs and EDIHs, where relevant, in light of the EHDS and the AIA; - Guidelines for creating and deploying the necessary capabilities for HDABs to support the development, testing and deployment pathways for AI in healthcare; - Reports on the tests and showcases conducted; - Recommendations for the implementing of development, testing and deployment pathways of AI in health based on the opportunities offered by the EHDS and the requirements of the AIA.
Further information	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/digital-2024-cloud-data-06-healthcare-ai
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	Although the call is not of clear general interest to WB DIHs, it may be of interest to DIHs specialised in health.

ECONET RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS



In general, and despite the name, DIGITAL is not a programme that econet recommends to be prioritised in this case by the WB DIHs, mainly due to the fact that co-financing is 50%.

Although only one call of potential interest of the WPs 2023-2024 has been highlighted, with the publication of the WP 2025 in the coming months it is possible that new ones will emerge. In any case, the most relevant one will be the call for EDIHs for BIH.

We therefore recommend staying attentive to the publication of news calls here: [The DIGITAL Europe Programme – Work Programmes](#)

3.5 Erasmus +

Erasmus+ is the EU programme supporting education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Its budget is estimated at €26.2 billion. This is almost double that of its predecessor programme from 2014 to 2020. Between 2021 and 2027, the programme places particular emphasis on social inclusion, green and digital transformation and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.

For most actions in Erasmus+, organisation will need to be located in a programme country. Programme countries are the EU member states and a short list of other economies associated to the Programme, including **North Macedonia and Serbia**.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo* and Montenegro are among the “non-associated third countries (Partner Countries)”. Third countries not associated to the Programme may participate in certain Actions of the Programme, subject to certain criteria or conditions, which for the calls we will highlight means the impossibility of coordinating projects, but **DIHs from Albania, BiH, Kosovo* and Serbia** could participate in the consortia as full beneficiary.

With an annual budget of €4.2 billion, Erasmus+ is increasing its support for inclusion, active citizenship and democratic participation, and green and digital transformations in the EU and internationally.

The latest work programme available as of today is 2024, with no open calls identified at this stage. However, calls of interest are expected in WP 2025, which will be detailed in the second update of this document after the summer. Tentative information on the most interesting actions for **WB DIHs** are shown in the following tables.

Capacity building in VET	
	Forthcoming
Programme	Erasmus+
ID	EDUCATION AND TRAINING - KEY ACTION 2 - Capacity building in VET
Type of action	Erasmus Lump Sum Grant
Deadline model	-
Publication Date	End of 2023 (forecast)
Deadline date 1	Early 2024 (forecast)
Budget for Call	Not available
Call information	<p>This action in the field of Vocational Education and Training (VET) supports international cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of VET in EU Member State, third countries associated to the Programme and third countries not associated to the Programme.</p> <p>Project results are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reinforce the links between the VET system and its labour market so as to better align VET to (emerging) local labour market opportunities; - increase the link between VET profiles and local/regional/ domestic strategies and priorities impacted by skills, in particular those supported by other European Union actions, in order to ensure coherence;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase the capacities of VET providers especially in the fields of management, governance, inclusion, quality assurance, innovation; and internationalisation; - support the exposure of staff, managers, policy makers and senior teachers to approaches bringing the labour market and VET closer (dual learning, curriculum development with private sector partners...); - improve the knowledge, technical, managerial and pedagogical skills of VET teachers and trainers; - integrate the input from teachers/trainers, VET learners and employers, from private sector in particular, into curriculum, profile design and training reform; - improve the level of competences, skills and employability potential of VET learners by developing new and innovative VET education programmes, especially those delivering key competences, such as languages and ICT skills; - foster cooperation across different regions of the world through joint initiatives.
Further information	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/capacity-building-vet
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	There is a wide variety of entities that can take part in Erasmus calls. In particular, this call could be of interest to help the entities that participate in the WB DIHs and are focused in training in technological fields, since they help to improve the labor insertion of young people in fields that, like the technological one, have a high demand for professional profiles.

Partnerships for Cooperation in the fields of education and training and youth	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Erasmus+
ID	EDUCATION AND TRAINING - KEY ACTION 2 – Cooperation partnerships
Type of action	Erasmus Lump Sum Grant
Deadline model	-
Publication Date	End of 2023 (forecast)
Deadline date 1	Early 2024 (forecast)
Budget for Call	Not available
Call information	Cooperation Partnerships aim at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing quality in the work, activities and practices of organisations and institutions involved, opening up to new actors, not naturally included within one sector; - Building capacity of organisations to work transnationally and across sectors; - Addressing common needs and priorities in the fields of education, training, youth and sport; - Enabling transformation and change (at individual, organisational or sectoral level), leading to improvements and new approaches, in proportion to the context of each organisation..
Further information	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/cooperation-partnerships
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	There is a wide variety of entities that can take part in Erasmus calls. In particular, this call could be of interest to help the entities that participate in the WB DIHs and are focused in training for youth people.

Alliances for Innovation	
Forthcoming	
Programme	Erasmus+
ID	Lot 1. Alliances for Education and Enterprises. Lot 2. Alliances for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills.
Type of action	Erasmus Lump Sum Grant
Deadline model	-
Publication Date	End of 2023 (forecast)
Deadline date 1	Early 2024 (forecast)
Budget for Project	Lot 1. EUR 1 million (2-year project); 1.5 million (3-year project). Lot 2. 4 million (4-year project)
Call information	<p><u>Lot 1: Education and Business Partnerships.</u> A wide range of activities are funded (a detailed list of activities is specified in the 2024 programme guide, which serve as a reference for the 2024 call). Of potential interest to entities of the WB DIHs. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creation of incubators in education and training institutions across Europe, in close cooperation with the business sector; - opening up new learning opportunities through practical experiences, as well as entrepreneurial competences and skills that can involve or lead to the implementation of new services, products and prototypes, and the creation of start-ups and spin-offs. spin-offs, etc. <p><u>Lot 2: Partnerships for Sectoral Cooperation on Capacities.</u> A wide range of activities are funded (see 2024 programme guide for details, as a reference for the 2024 call). For instance, of potential interest to entities of the WB DIHs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · establishment of sustainable cooperation mechanisms on skills development between key industry stakeholders, in particular social partners, education and training providers and public authorities (at economy and regional level). Organisations from third countries not associated to the Programme may also participate as full partners but not as coordinator.
Further information	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/alliances-innovation
PERSONALISED INFORMATION	
Recommendations for WB DIHs	<p>Members of WB DIHs could fit well within a consortium in these calls. The Lot 1 constitute transnational projects that bring together businesses and providers of higher education and vocational training to collaborate with the aim to drive innovation in higher education, vocational training, and business, cultivate entrepreneurial spirit and competencies and stimulate the flow and exchange of knowledge between higher education, vocational training, and businesses.</p> <p>On the other hand, entities could be particularly interested in Lot 2 would be positioned: Partnerships for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills, aiming to address skills deficits in the labour market within a specific industrial ecosystem defined by the call.</p> <p>Proposals within Lot 2 should include the design of continuous professional training programmes that address the urgent skills needs of the working-age population. They should also include the development of emerging professional profiles and the qualifications associated with these, covering up to higher and post-secondary levels of vocational education and training (levels 3 to 5 of the EQF) and tertiary level (levels 6 to 8 of the EQF). Furthermore, proposals should encompass the design of related core curricula and education and training programmes leading to these qualifications. Each project should have among its partners both vocational education and training (VET) organisations and higher education institutions, as well as labour market stakeholders. If possible, they</p>

should also include policy-making bodies, certification agencies, and European sectoral associations, along with industry representatives.

ECONET RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS



It is recommended to follow the news on the portal: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities> . Attend webinars, workshops, and partner search forums associated with Erasmus+ to strengthen your network, gain insights, and enhance your applications.

As the 2025 dates are a forecast, watch out for the calls foreseen in the 2025 Work Programme. Plan and prepare your proposals in advance to adapt them to the expected areas of interest. For further information, it is recommended to contact the Erasmus+ offices in each country: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/contacts/national-erasmus-offices>.

4. CALLS CALENDAR

EU Consortia Programmes

Programme	Call	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Interreg	Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro: Call for strategic proposals												
	Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro: 2nd Call for standard proposals												
	Interreg IPA South Adriatic: Italy -Albania - Montenegro												
	Interreg EURO-MED: 4th call: Thematic Projects (Test and Transfer Projects only)												
	Interreg EURO-MED 5th call: Thematic Projects (Strategic Territorial Projects only)												
	Interreg Europe: Third call for projects												
	Interreg Europe: Restricted call for the seven new Partner States												
HORIZON EUROPE Pillar II	Advanced real-time data analysis used for infrastructure resilience												
	Mitigating new threats and adapting investigation strategies in the era of Internet of Things												
	Approaches and tools for security in software and hardware development and assessment												
	Accelerating uptake through open proposals for advanced SME innovation												
	Advancing Large AI Models: Integration of New Data Modalities and Expansion of Capabilities (AI, Data and Robotics Partnership)												

Programme	Call	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25-
	Explainable and Robust AI (AI Data and Robotics Partnership)												
	Digital Humanism - Putting people at the centre of the digital transformation												
	Intellectual asset management support for public research organisations, academic institutions and their spin-offs												
	Robotics and other automated solutions for construction, renovation and maintenance in a sustainable built environment (Built4People Partnership)												
	Digital tools for CSP and solar thermal plants												
	BIM-based processes and digital twins for facilitating and optimising circular energy renovation (Built4People Partnership)												
	AI for advanced and collective perception and decision making for CCAM applications (CCAM Partnership)												
	Digital solutions to foster participative design, planning and management of buildings, neighbourhoods and urban districts (Built4People Partnership)												
HORIZON EUROPE Pillar III	Expanding Academia-Enterprise Collaborations												
	Mutual learning and support scheme for national and regional innovation programmes												
HORIZON EUROPE Widening	Hop-On Facility												
	ERA Talents												
	Teaming for Excellence												
DIGITAL	Support for Health Data Access Bodies to foster efficient pathways for AI in healthcare												



Programme	Call	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25-
ERAMSUS+	EDIHs Network Call (for BiH)												
	Capacity building in VET												
	Partnerships for Cooperation in the fields of education and training and youth												
	Alliances for Innovation												

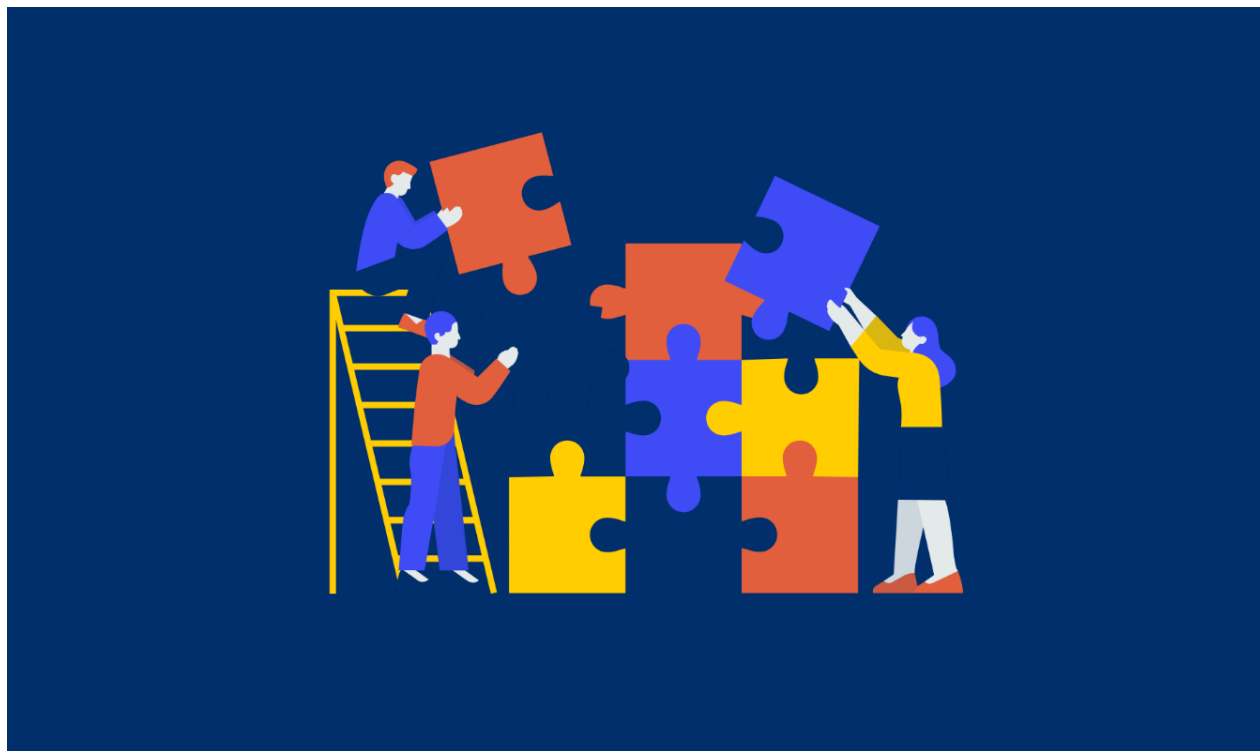
Cascade Funding

Call	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25-
2nd REINFORCING Open Call - Incubators Call on Balkans												
PolicyAnswers Western Balkans Researchers Mobility Scheme												
MASTER: 1st Open Call												
NGI Zero Commons Fund - 2nd Call												
NGI Mobifree 2nd open call												
XR2Industry Open Call for Hardware Enablers												
VOXReality Open Call												
PolicyAnswers Western Balkans Innovation Voucher												
COROB open call												

Call	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug 24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr 25-
Foodity 2nd Open Call	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold									
Nephele 2nd open call				Light Gold	Light Gold							
Indusac open call for students and researchers	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold						
dAIEdge 1st open call for the Exchange Programme	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold						
TALOS 1st open call					Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold				
RESIST - International travel FSTP	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold				
GEMSTONE - TRAIN call	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold				
GEMSTONE - EXPLORE call	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold				
AI_REDGIOS 2nd call for third-parties support						Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold		
INGENIOUS Training Grants	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold		
EEN2EIC - Voucher for Local Nodes	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	Dark Gold	

Calls with confirmed dates are indicated in **dark gold**, as they have already been called or announced, and calls awaiting publication or confirmation of definitive dates are indicated in **light gold**.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS.



There are several grants from the European Commission that may fit **WB DIHs**, as we have already introduced and are presented in the previous calendar.

These calls for proposals stand out above the others. The reasons for this are described in the recommendations on the previous pages of this document, located at the end of each of these call blocks:

For WB DIHs as coordinators/partners:

- Interreg **Europe (third call and restricted call to join previous projects)** (June 2024)
- Interreg **IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro** (July 2024 and February 2025)
- Interreg **IPA South Adriatic: Italy -Albania – Montenegro** (July 2024)
- Interreg **Euro-MED** (June 2024 and September 2024)
- HORIZON- EIE: **Expanding Academia-Enterprise Collaborations** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-WIDERA: **Hop On Facility** (September 2024)
- DIGITAL: **EDIHs Call for BiH** (forthcoming)

For WB DIHs through its partners:

- HORIZON-WIDERA: **ERA Talents** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-WIDERA: **Teaming for Excellence** (April 2025)
- HORIZON- EIE: **Mutual learning and support scheme for domestic and regional innovation programmes** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-CL3: **Advanced real-time data analysis used for infrastructure resilience** (November 2024)
- HORIZON-CL3: **Mitigating new threats and adapting investigation strategies in the era of Internet of Things** (November 2024)
- HORIZON-CL3: **Approaches and tools for security in software and hardware development and assessment** (November 2024)
- HORIZON-CL3: **Accelerating uptake through open proposals for advanced SME innovation** (November 2024)
- HORIZON-CL4: **Advancing Large AI Models: Integration of New Data Modalities and Expansion of Capabilities (AI, Data and Robotics Partnership)** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-CL4: **Explainable and Robust AI (AI Data and Robotics Partnership)** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-CL4: **Digital Humanism - Putting people at the centre of the digital transformation** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-CL4: **Intellectual asset management support for public research organisations, academic institutions and their spin-offs** (September 2024)
- HORIZON-CL5: **Robotics and other automated solutions for construction, renovation and maintenance in a sustainable built environment** (January 2025)
- HORIZON-CL5: **Digital tools for CSP and solar thermal plants** (January 2025)
- HORIZON-CL5: **BIM-based processes and digital twins for facilitating and optimising circular energy renovation** (January 2025)

- HORIZON-CL5: **AI for advanced and collective perception and decision making for CCAM applications** (January 2025)
- HORIZON-CL5: **Digital solutions to foster participative design, planning and management of buildings, neighbourhoods and urban districts** (January 2025)
- DIGITAL: **Support for Health Data Access Bodies to foster efficient pathways for AI in healthcare** (May 2024)
- Erasmus Education and Training - Key Action 2 - **Capacity building in VET** (February 2025)
- Erasmus Education and Training - Key Action 2 – **Partnerships for Cooperation in the fields of education and training and youth** (March 2025)
- Erasmus Education and Training - Key Action 2 – **Alliances for Innovation** (March 2025)
- Cascade Funding-**All the opportunities listed in section 3.3.**

Taking into account **WB DIHs** needs, and in order to be aware of the different calls for proposals and to search for partners, it is recommended as an action plan:

A) For EU Programmes, Ordinary Calls:

- Prepare a Partner Profile with **WB DIHs** information and expertise.
- Get the PIC number and be sure all steps for its validation will be done.
- Upload profile in topics of interest. Each call topic has a specific section “Partner Section”, where you can showcase your interest in participating by adding your organisation profile.

B) For Cascade Funding

- Register in the different Contact Lists and newsletters of the projects identified in this document, in order to receive regularly updated information,
- Follow them on social networks.
- Go to the partner search sections of the calls/programmes pages to identify partners that could be of interest in the case of calls that require a partnership.
- Periodically check the EU Portal for new projects providing cascade funding.

- Register on the www.fundingbox.com and OnePass (getonepass.eu) where all existing cascade funding opportunities are collected.

At the same time, it is very important to keep updating the funding opportunities because, as mentioned at different points in the document, there are interesting calls for proposals for **WB DIHs** and its partners to be published in the coming months.

As a final recommendation as many programmes/ projects require partnership (consortia) to apply for funding we recommend in order to become a part of those consortia to search take the following steps:

- Sign up to the different contact lists and newsletters from the different programmes and projects in order to receive updated information about them.
- Follow the different programmes and projects on social networks.
- Refer to the different programmes to the “partner search” sections in order to identify potential partners.
- Make use of travel grants available to connect with other partners:
<https://www.ncpwideranet.eu/travel-grants/>

6. ANNEX

European Enterprise Network (EEN)

In addition to the specific funding opportunities mentioned in the previous sections, it is necessary to highlight the role that the EEN could play in providing advice on European funding, and in particular advice and support in building European consortia to participate in the suggested calls for proposals.

The EEN helps businesses innovate and grow on an international scale. It is the world's largest support network for SMEs and is active in more than 60 economies worldwide and it brings together 3,000 experts from more than 600 member organisations.

The EEN manages Europe's largest online database of business opportunities - it provides an opportunity to search for business or academic partners to manufacture, distribute, co-develop and supply products, ideas, and services.

The contact points by economy are set out below:

Albania

DURRES

DHOMA E TREGTISE DHE INDUSTRISE DURRES			
Address	Lagjia 11, Rr. 'Aleksander Goga', Pallti Borova, Durres DURRES 2001, Albania	Email	info@ccdir.al
Telephone	+355 694050542	Website	http://www.ccidr.al

TIRANA

DHOMA EKONOMIKE E GRAVE TE SHQIPERISE			
Address	Rr. 'Andon Zako Cajupi', TIRANA 1001 Albania	Email	info@weca.al
Telephone	+355 69 802 1111	Website	http://www.weca.al
AGJENCIA KOMBETARE E KERKIMIT SHKENCOR DHE INOVACIONIT			
Address	Pruga "Naim Frashëri", Nr.37, Tiranë, Shqipëri TIRANA 1001 Albania	Email	info@nasri.gov.al
Telephone	+ 355 4 222 24 09	Website	http://www.nasri.gov.al
FONDACIONIT AGJENCIA RAJONALE E ZHVILLIMIT SME			
Address	FONDACIONIT AGJENCIA RAJONALE E ZHVILLIMIT SME	Email	rrembecil06@gmail.com
Telephone	+355 692086323	Website	http://www.rdatirana.al
QENDRA PER PROMOVIMIN E KONKURRUESHMERISE			

Address	Rruga e Durresit, P. 7, Sh. 1, Ap.1, Tirana, Albania TIRANA 1001 Albania	Email	info@ccp.al
Telephone	+355 692141920	Website	http://www.ccp.al

Bosnia And Herzegovina

BANJA LUKA

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF REPUBLIKA SRPSKA			
Address	Branka Copica 6 Banja Luka 78000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@komorars.ba
Telephone	+387 51 493 121	Website	http://www.komorars.ba
UNIVERZITET U BANJOJ LUCI			
Address	Bulevar Vojvode Petra Bojovica 1 A Banja Luka 78000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@unibl.org
Telephone	+387 51 321 171	Website	http://www.unibl.org/
FOUNDATION INNOVATION CENTRE BANJA LUKA			
Address	Dr. Mladena Stojanovica 4 Banja Luka 78000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@icbl.ba
Telephone	+387 51 340 600	Website	http://www.icbl.ba/
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA			
Address	Trg jasenovackih žrtava Banja Luka 78000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	een@rars-msp.org
Telephone	+387 51 222 120	Website	http://www.rars-msp.org/en-US/o-nama/o-age
QENDRA PER PROMOVIMIN E KONKURRUESHMERISE			
Address	Rruga e Durresit, P. 7, Sh. 1, Ap.1, Tirana, Albania TIRANA 1001 Albania	Email	info@ccp.al
Telephone	+355 692141920	Website	http://www.ccp.al

ISTOCNO SARAJEVO

UNIVERZITET U ISTOCNOM SARAJEVU			
Address	Vuka Karadzica 30 Istocno Sarajevo 71123 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	Not available
Telephone	+387 57 320 330	Website	http://www.ues.rs.ba

MOSTAR

ZAKLADA ZA INOVACIJSKI I TEHNOLOSKIRAZVITAK			
Address	Bisce Polje Bb Mostar 88000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@intera.ba
Telephone	+387 36 327 972	Website	http://www.intera.ba

SARAJEVO

UNIVERZITET U SARAJEVU			
Address	Obala Kulina Bana 7/li Sarajevo 71000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	Not available
Telephone	38733565123	Website	http://www.unsa.ba
VANJSKOTRGOVINSKA/SPOLJNOTRGOVINSKA KOMORA BIH			
Address	Branislava Djurdjeva 10 Sarajevo 71000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	een@komorabih.ba
Telephone	387 (0)33 566241; 387(0) 33 56 6242	Website	http://www.komorabih.ba

TUZLA

JAVNO PREDUZECE BIT CENTAR DOO U TUZLI			
Address	Trg Slobode 16 Tuzla 75000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@bit.ba
Telephone	+387 35 304 650	Website	http://www.bit.ba

ZENICA

ZENICKA RAZVOJNA AGENCIJA ZEDA DOO			
Address	Ul. Poslovna Zona Zenica 1, Zmaja Od Bosne Bb, Zgr Technopark-A Zenica Zenica 72000 Bosnia and Herzegovina	Email	info@zeda.ba
Telephone	+387 32 449 410	Website	http://www.zeda.ba

Kosovo*

PRISTINA

THE ENTERPRISE AGENCY OF PRISHTINA REGION UDRUZENJE			
Address	Str. Zagrebi Hyrja 23 Kati li Nr 8 Priština 10000 Kosovo*	Email	Not available

Telephone	+38 138244951	Website	Not available
SHOQATA PER TEKNOLOGJI TE INFORMACIONIT DHE TE KOMUNIKIMIT TE KOSOVES			
Address	Rexhep Mala 28a Priština 10000 Kosovo*	Email	Not available
Telephone	+38 138771180	Website	Not available

Montenegro

BAR

FONDACIJA BIZNIS START - UP CENTARBAR			
Address	Bulevar Revolucije Bb Poslovni Centar Kula A5 Bar 85000 Montenegro	Email	info@bscbar.org
Telephone	382 30686380	Website	http://www.bscbar.org

PODGORICA

JAVNA USTANOVA UNIVERZITET CRNE GORE PODGORICA			
Address	Cetinjska 2 Podgorica 81000 Montenegro	Email	mf@cg.ac.me
Telephone	382 20 245 116	Website	http://www.mf.cg.ac.me
MINISTARSTVO EKONOMIJE			
Address	Rimski Trg 46 Podgorica 81000 Montenegro	Email	info@euroinfo.me
Telephone	+382 20482335	Website	http://www.euroinfo.me
PRIVREDNA KOMORA CRNE GORE PODGORICA			
Address	Novaka Miloseva 29 II Podgorica 81000 Montenegro	Email	pkcg@pkcg.org
Telephone	382 20 230 545	Website	http://www.komora.me/

North Macedonia

SKOPJE

Ss. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE			
Address	Blvd Goce Delcev 9 Skopje 1000 North Macedonia	Email	info@een.mk
Telephone	389 2 3293 204	Website	http://www.ukim.edu.mk

Serbia

BELGRADE

DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SERBIA			
Address	Kneza Milosa 12 Belgrade 11000 Serbia	Email	een@ras.gov.rs
Telephone	+381 11 3398900	Website	http://www.ras.gov.rs
INSTITUT MIHAJLO PUPIN			
Address	Volgina 15 Belgrade 11060 Serbia	Email	cirnt@pupin.rs
Telephone	+381 11 6774 452	Website	http://www.pupin.rs/cirnt
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia			
Address	Resavska 13-15 Belgrade 11000 Serbia	Email	een@pks.rs
Telephone	+ 381 11 4149 448	Website	http://www.pks.rs

NIS

UNIVERZITET U NISU			
Address	Univerzitetski Trg 2 Niš 18000 Serbia	Email	een-srbija@eknfak.ni.ac.rs
Telephone	+381 18 257970	Website	http://www.ni.ac.rs

NOVI SAD

POSLOVNI INKUBATOR NOVI SAD - BUSINESS INCUBATOR NOVI SAD DRUSTVO SA OGRANICENOM ODGOVORNOSCU NOVI SAD			
Address	Vojvodjanskih Brigada 28 Novi Sad 21000 Serbia	Email	een-srbija@uns.ac.rs
Telephone	+381 18 257 970	Website	http://www.inkubator.biz

Furthermore, Enterprise Europe Network can provide business advice for market expansion and innovation support services. The Network offers access to a range of advisory services such as: financial, intellectual property, CE marking, access to market, innovation strategy etc. The full areas of expertise are can be found on each EEN Contact Point [webpage](#).



Brokerage Events Travel Grants Available

The NCP_WIDERA.NET project partners have launched a travel grants programme to support participation of applicants from Widening countries to Pillar II clusters and European partnerships brokerage events organised on-site.

The aim is to establish working contacts between coordinators looking for new partners and to increase the uptake in Horizon Europe proposal submissions.

You can receive up to 1,000 EUR to cover the costs of your travel and accommodation to a matchmaking event.

The project partners from the following countries have implemented the programme:

- Macedonia. For more information please contact Prof. Vlatko Sheshov:
vlatko@pluto.izjns.ukim.edu.mk
- Montenegro
- Serbia

All information is available in the website: <https://www.ncpwideranet.eu/travel-grants/>