



22ND EHEALTH NETWORK MEETING 7 NOVEMBER 2022, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

COVER NOTE

6.2 Update on funding opportunities: Digital Europe and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) programmes

1. Issue at stake

Update on funding opportunities relevant for digital health under the Digital Europe and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) programmes.

2. Summary

The **Digital Europe** programme is the EU funding programme focused on bringing digital technology to businesses, citizens and public administrations. It supports projects in five key capacity areas: supercomputing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, advanced digital skills, and ensuring a wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society, including through European Digital Innovation Hubs.

Projects selected from the first Call of the Work Programme 2021-22 have just started. Those selected from the second Call are under Grant Agreement preparation and expected to start in January 2023.

The Digital Europe Programme will contribute to the deployment of European common data spaces as outlined in the European strategy for data, including the European Health Data Space. To this end, its work programme 2021-22 supports the development of an open-source cloud-to-edge middleware infrastructure that can be used in different data spaces, complemented by large-scale pilots for cloud-to-edge based service solutions in a number of sectors that can include health. The Call for these large-scale pilots is currently open.

The programme funds also a data spaces support centre that coordinates all relevant actions on sectorial data spaces. Support to the deployment of two health-specific federated European data infrastructures will facilitate secure, cross-border access to genomics data and cancer images data.

Health sector is also one of the potential sectors targeted under a call supporting the piloting of European Digital Identity Wallets, which could contribute to improving patients' access to their health data (e.g. ePrescription or patient summary).

The Testing and Experimentation Facility (TEF) for Health supported under the Digital Europe work programme shall ultimately foster trust and acceptance and boost the roll-out of European AI, data and robotics solutions from the lab to the market through its validation process. The aim is to accelerate testing by creating common, accessible infrastructures and services, which combine the necessary technical, administrative, medical and ethical procedures and certifications, as appropriate.

The Digital Europe work programme 2021-22 includes also two coordination and support actions specifically targeting health, on uptake of digital health solutions and on digital twins in healthcare by strengthening the related ecosystem. Another dedicated topic focuses on strengthening cybersecurity resilience in healthcare and health institutions.

The **Connecting Europe Facility** (CEF) is a European Union funding programme to promote growth, jobs, inclusiveness and competitiveness through the efficient interconnection of transport, energy and digital networks within and across Member States. It fosters public and private investments for the development of high-performance, sustainable trans-European infrastructures as the “nervous system” of an increasingly interconnected European society.

CEF Digital aims among other things to enhance the availability and access to trustworthy cloud offerings throughout the EU. Public administrations, public or private entities entrusted with the operation of Services of general interest (SGIs) require safe and secure access to trustworthy cloud services. Those user entities could increasingly rely on the capacities available in other Member States, instead of spending money to buy and operate infrastructure that is sporadically used during peak-time. The security and trustworthiness of cloud infrastructures is therefore of essential importance and should be strengthened, by providing users with access to multiple computing resources across several Member States as a result of the projects supported by CEF Digital.

The connectivity needs triggered by the recent legislative proposal on European Health Data Space are significant and are the cornerstone to the many foreseen uses. These needs exist among public sector authorities as well as public-private entities, within and among member States. They are substantial needs for primary use of data (i.e. data in between the patient, its doctors and the administration), and are several orders of magnitude bigger for secondary use of data (i.e. the anonymised re-use of patient data for research purposes).

Under this Call (CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD-FED-STUDIES - Interconnection of backbone networks for Cloud federations – Studies), applicants may apply for grants covering analysis of needs related to the development and deployment of cross-border and national infrastructures for cloud interconnections, as well as cloud interconnections with HPC and edge infrastructures at both the physical (i.e. very high capacity networks) and functional levels (i.e. management systems, software-defined infrastructures) for public sector end-users and private actors operating data infrastructures for services of general public interest across the EU.

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

No action required only for information. There will be sufficient time for MS to ask questions.