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Entrepreneurial Academy 2024

Join us in boosting entrepreneurship and education
for a strong digital Europe.



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1 Introduction

The EIT Digital Entrepreneurial Academy is looking for digital deep-tech education providers to support for development and deployment of programmes and courses with business-oriented components.

To this end, the EIT Entrepreneurial Academy launches on 04 October 2023 an open call with submission deadline on 04 December 2023. The process is guided by the EIT Digital Strategic Innovation Agenda 2022-2024 (SIA), which identifies the five focus areas of our strategy: Digital Tech, Digital Industry, Digital Cities, Digital Wellbeing and Digital Finance. An overview is available on page 13 of the SIA. As a result, entrepreneurial education proposals are expected to be aligned with these areas.

2 EIT Digital Entrepreneurial Academy 2024

Entrepreneurial education is a cornerstone in creating a Europe where industry and key public sectors are populated, on all levels, with knowledgeable, innovative and entrepreneurial people that drive the innovation economy and create open and effective public organisations.

The **EIT Digital Entrepreneurial Academy** supports the development and deployment of programmes and courses with business development-oriented components. The education paradigm is that learning must emulate the speed of business to meet disruptive technology and business model changes. EIT Digital does this by:

- EIT Labelled **Master** educational programmes breeding talents with an entrepreneurial mindset,
- EIT Digital **Summer School** based on innovation and business education through real cases studies,
- EIT Digital **Professional Education** at the technology and innovation front.

In 2024, we seek Activity proposals for the **Summer School**.

Partners are invited to co-invest with us and benefit from the impact of improved Education contributing to the digital transformation of Europe and the creation of a European talent pool and a digitally skilled workforce.

3 Summer School

The EIT Digital Summer School organises programmes that combine state-of-the-art excellence in key digital technologies and societal and industrial applications with expertise in Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E). EIT Digital aims at building a portfolio of 5 two-week summer schools and 5 one-week summer schools.

Two-Week Summer Schools

The two-week Summer Schools host students from the EIT Digital Master School. The main objective of these programmes is to cultivate creativity and critical thinking in students to help them identify innovative business opportunities. During the first week, students deep dive into emerging technologies with focused lectures, keynotes by academics and practitioners, and meetings with professionals. During the second week, students work in teams and are supported by coaches to acquire knowledge, skills, and practical experience necessary to conceptualize, develop, and launch their own entrepreneurial ventures. The addition of a final pitch competition at the end of the programme will provide students with an opportunity to showcase their entrepreneurial skills and receive valuable feedback from a selected jury.

Programmes are delivered between the month of July and mid-August 2024. Each programme is designed for a minimum capacity of 40 participants and includes accommodation in shared room option, meals (breakfast, lunches, and some dinners during the social events) and social events also during the weekend. Travels for the Master School students to reach the programme are excluded.

The key ingredients of a strong and impactful proposal are:

- **The Topic.** The proposal must provide evidence of the alignment with one of the five strategic focus areas described in the EIT Digital Strategic Innovation Agenda 2022-2024: Digital Tech, Digital Industry, Digital Cities, Digital Wellbeing and Digital Finance.
- **The Location.** An easily accessible location in Europe to facilitate the organisation of travels.
- **Focus on venture creation.** The proposal must provide details on how the students will be encouraged to submit their initial business concepts before the programme officially begins and on how students will be divided into teams to work collaboratively on venture creation projects.
- **Experience:** The proposal provides evidence of a strong track record in venture creation process and evidence of the ability to guide participants effectively.
- **Collaboration with Industry.** Partners teaming up with companies able to help the students by providing business concepts for venture creation will score higher in the review process.

When making a proposal for a Summer School, Partners commit to offer Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Education in accordance with the current EIT Digital Summer Schools guidelines.

Since the two-week Summer Schools are designed for the EIT Digital Master School programme only, no marketing and sales campaign is required to be provided by the Partner organization.

One-Week Summer Schools

The one-week Summer Schools are designed for doctoral students, researchers, young professionals and other willing to deep dive into emerging technologies and learn how to create new businesses using these technologies. Programmes are delivered between the month of July and mid-August 2024. Each programme is designed for a minimum capacity of 40 participants and includes a welcome event the day before the programme, lunches, outdoor social activities. Travels and accommodations for participants are excluded.

The key ingredients of a strong and impactful proposal are:

- **The Topic.** Evidence of the attractiveness of the topic, based on market studies of learning needs, must be demonstrated. Favourite topics are High-Performance Computing (Quantum Computing), Generative AI, Defense, Space, Green Digital. Other disruptive deep-tech topics will also be considered.
- **The Location.** An easily accessible location in Europe with the potential to attract many participants.
- **Support to the marketing campaign.** The proposal must provide details on how the Partner will support EIT Digital to increase the number of paying participants during the marketing and sales campaign.
- **Experience:** The proposal provides evidence of a strong track record in the organisation of deep-tech education programmes.
- **Collaboration with Industry.** Partners teaming up with organisations with a strong local industrial network able to support the recruitment of participants (for instance via pre-paid scholarships) will score higher in the review process. These organisations can be, for instance, regional funds, education funds, associations of startups/companies operating in one specific sector, etc.

When making a proposal for a Summer School, Partners commit to offering Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in accordance with the latest EIT Digital Summer Schools guidelines. EIT Digital reserves the right to cancel the Summer School if its costs cannot be covered by the participants.

4 How to participate

EIT Digital is a partnership-based organization. Therefore, proposers are expected to be or become Partner of EIT Digital. Organisations that are not yet Partners are expected to submit their partnership application, at the latest, at the submission of the proposal.

A recommendation to Partners, especially to new Partners, is to be in contact with EIT Digital before the submission date to ensure a clear understanding of the requirements.

Please refer to Annex A, Annex B, Annex C, and Annex D for more details on the proposal submission and evaluation processes.

For partners from the UK and Switzerland

Since the UK and Switzerland have not concluded an association with Horizon Europe at the time of publication of this document.

For partners from Hungary

This is to inform you that Council Implementing Decision 2022/2506 might directly impact the implementation of summer School grant. This Decision stipulates that legal commitments must not be entered into with any public interest trusts established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust. This applies as of 16 December 2022 for as long as the measures are in place.

We advise partners from these countries to connect with the relevant Regional Directors to confirm under which conditions they can participate in the Entrepreneurial Academy 2024.

5 Annexes

Annex A. Proposal submission

All proposals need to be filled and submitted via the EIT Digital submission system that can be reached via the [EIT Digital intranet page](#). Proposals need to be formally submitted via the EIT Digital submission system before the hard **deadline on 04 December 2023, 5 pm CEST (Brussels time)**.

Information events will take place in October-November 2023 to provide additional information to the applicants to improve their chances of successful applications.

Should the quality of proposals be insufficient based on the evaluation criteria listed in Annex C, EIT Digital reserves the right to open a second submission to collect and assess new Education Activity proposals.

The detailed process, including requirements, criteria and evaluation methodology for Entrepreneurial Academy Activity proposals, is presented in Annex B and Annex C and .

Annex B. Process overview

B.1. Requirements

The **maximum EIT funding** amount is **30,000 €** per one-week **Summer School** programme.

The **maximum EIT funding** amount is **85,000 €** per two-week **Summer School** programme.¹

The **co-funding requirement** for the Partner at the Activity level is **minimally 50%** of the total budget of the KIC Added Value Activity (KAVA).

The following are examples of potential setups of an Activity budget:

- Total EIT funding amount requested: 30k€.
- Partners must provide minimally 50% in co-funding, i.e., at least 30k€.¹

¹ A financial support above EUR 60,000 applies to the HE cost eligibility rules. The grant can be awarded in line with the conditions for selecting the recipients of financial support to third parties, as defined in the original Call for proposals and in line with the eligibility requirements from the Grant Agreement Art. 6.2.D.1. https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf

B.2. Review process

B.2.1. Evaluation Gates

Each Education Activity proposal will be reviewed in three Evaluation Gates. Each Gate decision supersedes the previous one.

1. **First Gate - Experts Review:** Submitted proposals are assessed by independent external experts. Each expert individually evaluates each proposal following the evaluation criteria described in Annex C and provides comments to the Activity proposal supporting their assessment and feedback to the applicants, plus, recommendations to the Review Gate.
2. **Second Gate - Review Gate:** Experts come together and discuss each proposal based on their own individual assessments, following the requirements and guidelines of this document. The outcome is a consensus evaluation for each proposal that integrates and supersedes individual assessments as well as recommendations to MC Gate.
3. **Third Gate – MC Gate:** The Management Committee of EIT Digital analyses the Review Gate outcomes and recommendations to build a strong strategic education portfolio for the EIT Digital Business Plan. The outcome is the final go/no-go decision for each proposal and changes requests to the proposal, such as budget changes or changes in the Activity descriptions. A backup list of proposals may also be defined.



B.2.2. Feedback and following steps:

4. Applicants will find the feedback to their proposals, as “go/no-go”, including any changes requests, in the feedback tab of the submission system approximately 4 weeks after the deadline date. Note that for proposals involving organisations applying for an EIT Digital partnership, proposal acceptance is dependent on the EIT Digital Supervisory Board’s approval of the partnership application.
5. Applicants with “go” feedback may receive requests for changes to the Activity proposal and must implement those, as presented on the feedback tab of the submission system. These may include adjustments to the content of the Activity (outputs, KPIs, descriptions, etc.) and budget changes. Once changes are made, the reviewed proposal needs to be resubmitted in the EIT Digital submission system. If the required budget changes are not implemented within 1 week from the communication of the results, then the financials will be automatically and linearly adjusted for all Activity Partners to meet the requested target values.
6. Proposals for the Summer School that receive positive feedback are expected to provide the course description by mid-January 2024. Programmes are delivered onsite between the month of July and mid-August 2024. Communication activities funded by the grant

(including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media), dissemination activities and any, equipment, supplies or major result funded by EIT Digital must acknowledge the EU support and display the EIT Digital logo, the European flag (emblem) and funding statement: “EIT Digital is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union”. The duration of the contract is indicated in the Grant Agreement.

7. EIT Digital includes the selected Activities in the EIT Digital Business Plan and sends it for internal approval to its governing bodies and the EIT. Once EIT Digital receives feedback from the EIT on the Business Plan, the Education Activity Leader may be required to implement additional changes to the Activity proposal on the request from the EIT.

B.3. Appeal procedure

EIT Digital will, in good faith, address any potential disputes on the outcome of the selection process described in this document in a timely manner. An appeal should be issued, by the proposers, to the attention of the relevant Node Director, by factually underpinning the alleged incorrections in the evaluation and feedback provided by EIT Digital.

To respect the tight timeline, the following will apply:

1. Publication of the results: approximately 4 weeks after the submittal deadline
2. Proposers should bring the appeal to the attention of the relevant Node Director within 5 business days from the publication of the results.
3. The Node Director examines the appeal, and if the grounds for the appeal are found with merit, then the appeal will be sent for a second review by the Management Committee. The EIT Digital Management Committee will review the appeal and make a final decision.

Annex C. External experts' evaluation criteria

In line with the submission requirements, Education Activity proposals will be reviewed based on their quality and impact, market relevance, and financial sustainability of EIT Digital following the evaluation process previously described.

The assessment by independent individual external experts will be based on the questions reported in the table below. Reviewers will be asked to provide a score and comments for each question, as well as an assessment of the whole proposal.

Questions for Education Activity external experts (first gate)

Dimension	Question		Score Range	Min Required Score
Strategic Importance Excellence	Question 1	How well the proposal aligns with EIT Digital Focus Areas and Strategic Innovation Agenda 2022-2024?	0-5	2
	Question 2	How strong and disruptive is the proposal in the digital deep-tech domain?	0-5	2
Impact	Question 3	To which extent is the proposal contributing to entrepreneurial education and venture creation?	0-5	2
Quality and efficiency of the implementation Quality of Proposal	Question 4	How well is the proposal aligned with the requirements (workplan, KPIs, topic, financials, sustainability, format, responsibilities)?	0-5	2
	Question 5	How does the profile of the team members and previous experience in successfully implementing education activities ensure the proposal's successful implementation?	0-5	2
	Question 6	How well will the activity promote the programme to the Partners and participants/students, customers?	0-5	2

Market Relevance	Question 7	How precisely has the market been analysed?	0-5	2
	Question 8	How does the proposal help bridge the digital skill gap for participants?	0-5	2
Minimum Required Score*				16/40

*Minimum Required Score' should be achieved in all of the above categories for a proposal to proceed.

The assessment by independent individual external experts will be based on the questions reported in the table above. Reviewers are asked to score each proposal with respect to each question (scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the best assessment) and provide a textual comment for each question, as well as an assessment for the whole proposal.

After the individual review by the external experts, EIT Digital runs a Review Gate meeting (second gate) in which these experts come together and evaluate each proposal based on their own individual assessments. The goal is to reach a consensus evaluation of each proposal that integrates and supersedes individual assessments.

Afterwards, during the third and final gate, the EIT Digital Management Committee (MC) analyses the Review Gate outcome and recommendations and makes a final selection in order to build a strong strategic portfolio.

Annex D. EIT formal aspects: Costs Reporting and KPIs

This Annex includes important additional information related to formal requirements on KPIs, financial aspects and partnership for Activities that will be included in the EIT Digital Business Plan. It is therefore important that proposers read this section carefully. All Business Plan Activities need to comply with the Horizon Europe and EIT requirements, which may be subject to changes. In addition, a dedicated EIT Digital intranet page (requiring a valid EIT Digital intranet account to be accessed) contains further essential information for proposal authors. It will be kept up to date with the latest information.

The financial justification of the Activity is detailed in the EIT Digital submission system (tab "5. Budgets"). The budget information needs to be precise and concrete, considering the requirements from the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA). The MGA is a key document defining the general framework under which activities need to operate. The MGA will be shared with EIT Digital Partners via the EIT Digital intranet page. Also, it is important that the budget is assigned to the correct cost category:

- A. Personnel costs
- B. Sub-contracting costs

- C. Purchase costs
- D. Other cost categories
- E. Indirect costs. This is a flat rate of 25% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteer costs, subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and exempted specific cost categories, if any).

For more information about the eligibility of the costs, please refer to the MGA and in particular Article 6, available on EIT Digital's intranet page.

In terms of the MGA and the EIT Digital submission system content and requirements, please note the following:

- The "action": refers to the EIT Digital Business Plan, including its annexes.
- Costs need to be allocated to one or more tasks. Tasks define how the work is broken down between Partners and how much each part of the work costs. In the submission system, these tasks are called Catalyst Tasks. It is possible to model the budget of a Task based on planning assumptions, while the reporting will have to be based on actual costs, which cannot exceed the approved budget.
- "Annex I": refers to Annex I of the EIT Digital Business Plan, where all the Activity details and targets are reflected.
- Financial Support to Third Parties (or sub-granting) can be used to allocate budget to third parties outside the partnership. The sub-grantee selection process should be open, transparent and follow all applicable rules (as defined in the Model Grant Agreement). It is recommended to make limited use of this cost category.
- Sub-contracting: needs to be explicitly defined in the Business Plan Annex I and follow all the applicable rules, especially regarding value for money and avoidance of conflict of interests.
- Full-Time Equivalents (FTE): We strongly recommend a commitment of at least 0.2 FTE per Partner and Task Leader/Contributor to ensure meaningful involvement and allocating enough capacity to the specific task.

As set out in Art. 20 of the HE MGA, each beneficiary must keep appropriate and sufficient evidence to prove the eligibility of all the costs declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with all the other obligations under the Grant Agreement. The evidence must be verifiable, auditable and available. It must be correctly archived for the duration of the project indicated in the Grant Agreement. In general, the evidence must be kept for at least 5 years after final payment or longer if there are ongoing procedures (audits, investigations, litigation, etc.).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Each Activity needs to define its target values for a set of relevant KPIs, consisting of:

- EIT-Level KPIs (EIT KPIs): defined by the EIT for the entire EIT community (KICs). These are the most important KPIs and require supporting formal evidence of achievement. For example:
 - **EITHE08.1**: Participants in (non-degree) education and training
- KIC-Internal KPIs (INT KPIs): defined by EIT Digital as additional monitoring parameters. For example:
 - **INT05.1**: Number of start-up ideas generated as an output of the training
 - **INT10**: Number of Women part of the Activity Team
 - **INT11**: Number of Industry Partners engaged in Education Activities
- Activity Specific Quantifiable Targets (ASQTs): defined by individual Activity proposers and requested to define additional, measurable, Activity-specific targets that can demonstrate the impact of its implementation. These may include, for example, the number of students/learners that after the training are participating to one of our stand-up/start-up innovation instruments (DeepHack, Innovation Factory, RIS Venture Program)

To define their KPI targets, proposal authors need to be aware of the acceptance requirements of KPIs. Without the required evidence documentation, KPIs may not be accepted by EIT in the formal Activity review process. Please note that financial penalties may be applied by the EIT and EIT Digital in case of under-delivery, including under-achievements in any of the 3 above categories of targets and KPIs.

As valuable KPI achievements may also materialise during subsequent years, Partners will be asked to support the reporting of KPI results related to their Activity even after its official end.

Furthermore, EIT Digital follow-up the selected activities up to 5 years after activity completion to track long-term impact and to ensure the achievement of KPIs after the activity end.