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# DIGITALEUROPE recommendations on the operating principles of R&I partnerships

## Our recommendations

In the context of ongoing discussions between the European Commission, Member States and the industry in the definition of co-programmed and institutionalised European R&I partnerships in Horizon Europe, DIGITALEUROPE recommends the following:

- ▶ **All beneficiaries should contribute to the functioning of partnerships.** We support the full openness of partnership calls to the wider R&I community yet stress that project partners must be considered for the calculation of in-kind contributions to operational costs at project level, and must participate in the administrative costs of programme offices for institutionalised partnerships. Ultimately, the objective is to avoid any “free riding” and de-incentivising effects, leading to a lack of private partners (partnership association members).
- ▶ **Funding rates should be only adjusted at partnership level, following careful review and approval from private partners.** As partnerships will start during times of high economic uncertainty following the COVID-19 outbreak, we encourage the Commission to safeguard current levels of funding to support strong participation, notably from SMEs. Our members also remind that due to overheads and other costs non-eligible for reimbursement, even 100% funding rates usually do not fully cover the real costs supported by industry partners.
- ▶ **Financial contributions from the industry should only support the functioning of partnerships,** with a clear purpose, e.g. by participating in office costs of institutionalised partnerships. Generally, financial contributions should be avoided, and, in any case, they shall not be aggregated and used to fund R&I activities.
- ▶ **Industry commitments required by the public counterparts should be well defined** in advance and with clear contribution forecast and timelines, to reduce uncertainty for private partners. This should apply to both financial rules (how) and budgetary envelopes of the commitments (how much).
- ▶ **Required additional activities should be reasonable and clearly defined in the context of each partnership.** Such activities should be carried by all beneficiaries, not only private partners, and be based on existing and typical business activities developed by partners under Horizon 2020 or national programmes.

- ▶ **The introduction of additional provisions originating from non-partnership calls should be carefully assessed**, in discussion with partners. Pilot rules and requirements such as different publication of results and reporting provisions, or even the introduction of lump sums or daily rates, have not been fully reviewed yet and could negatively impact the work carried by partnerships.
- ▶ **Partnerships should be supported by a sufficient budget**, to enable innovation and create a leverage effect, crucial to Europe's growth and competitiveness. Further budget capping on partnerships, notably if set at cluster level, would counter the Commission's objective to develop partnership contributions and their impact. We support the development of synergies to streamline and simplify the partnership landscape when necessary and relevant, following extensive assessment.

DIGITALEUROPE looks forward to working with the European Commission and the broader community of R&I stakeholders to discuss and support the implementation of a fit-for-purpose and impact-oriented public-private partnerships framework.

**DIGITALEUROPE also developed in 2019 general recommendations on the European R&I public-private partnerships framework, addressing wider governance aspects<sup>1</sup>.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:



Julien Chasserieau

**Policy Manager**

[julien.chasserieau@digitaleurope.org](mailto:julien.chasserieau@digitaleurope.org) / +32 492 27 13 32

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.digitaleurope.org/resources/digitaleurope-recommendations-on-the-ri-partnerships-framework/>

## About DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies. DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies.

# DIGITALEUROPE Membership

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**Belgium:** AGORIA

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**Estonia:** ITL

**Finland:** TIF

**France:** AFNUM, Syntec Numérique, Tech in France

**Germany:** BITKOM, ZVEI

**Greece:** SEPE

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**Ukraine:** IT UKRAINE

**United Kingdom:** techUK