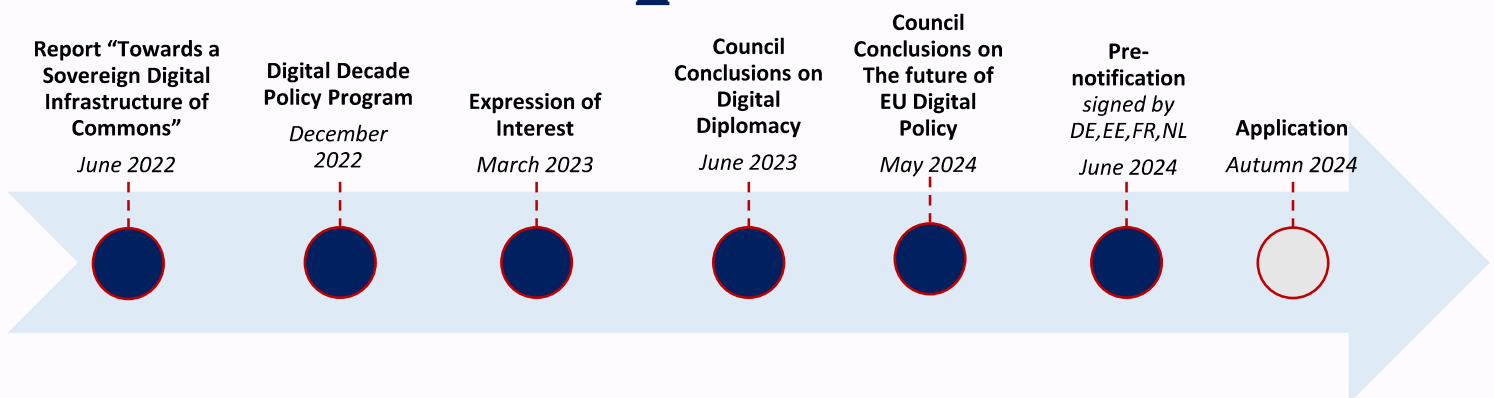# Digital Commons European Digital Infrastructure Consortium
## DC-EDIC

**Digital Commons EDIC's (DC-EDIC) main objective is to support the development, maintenance and scaling of digital commons as a pillar of our digital sovereignty, ensuring the development of a human-centred inclusive digital ecosystem supportive of democratic values**.

Europe has played a key role in the development of free, open, neutral, interoperable and secure technologies, such as the Internet, which is also the largest digital common. These funding principles are at the heart of the European Union's values embedded in the European treaties. A group of Member States has been promoting digital commons since 2022. They are now committed to establish a Digital Commons EDIC, to further collaborate and combine effort. **Therefore, in June 2024, Estonia, France, Germany and the Netherlands submitted a pre-notification to the European Commission to set up the DC-EDIC**.

## ⧖ Timeline



**Report "Towards a Sovereign Digital Infrastructure of Commons"**
*June 2022*

**Digital Decade Policy Program**
*December 2022*

**Expression of Interest**
*March 2023*

**Council Conclusions on Digital Diplomacy**
*June 2023*

**Council Conclusions on The future of EU Digital Policy**
*May 2024*

**Pre-notification** *signed by DE,EE,FR,NL*
*June 2024*

**Application**
*Autumn 2024*

## ⌖ The four priorities of the DC-EDIC:

❶ **Strengthening EU's Digital Sovereignty**, focusing on reducing technological dependencies through sustainable and viable alternatives offered by long-term supported digital commons.

❷ **Promote a multi-stakeholder and inclusive model of digital governance**, involving public authorities, the technical community, academia, civil society and industry, to pool resources and strengthen collaboration.

❸ **Contribute to the development of a digital public space** where secure and interoperable digital technologies and services are accessible, align with EU principles, rights, values and policies, and respect freedom of choice. This digital public space should be inclusive, and one and where everyone can benefit from the digital society

❹ **Make Europe a leading player in the digital transition through digital commons**, by empowering stakeholders, by promoting EU's competitiveness while ensuring a level-playing field, by harnessing innovation and the potential of a data economy, and by accommodating alternative business models.

## 💬 What are Digital Commons?

Digital Commons are **digital resources** which are defined by **distributed and communal production**, **ownership** and **governance**.

The governance includes access and sharing rules to ensure the **development** and **sustainability** of the resource and of the community, and to **restrain exclusive use**, **exclusive profit or value extraction**.

Digital commons are based on a **collectively defined framework** within which they can be produced and maintained, and can contribute to the realization of the **digital rights** laid down in the European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade and to the **self-determined use of digital technologies** and systems by individuals, industry, and governments.

Examples of digital commons are free and open-source software, open hardware, open standards and internet protocols, open education, open science and open data (e.g. *Wikipedia*, *OpenStreetMap*, *DNS and Internet protocols*, *Linux*, *Mastodon*)

# 📋 Actions and Activities

**Action 1 - Build a European Community for Digital Commons**: Digital commons are characterized by their reliance on communities (developers, organizations, users, public authorities, academia and private companies). The DC-EDIC will aim to create new **synergies on a European scale** and will create favourable conditions for more **fluid exchanges between stakeholders**, including through **coordination with existing initiatives**, in order to better understand the needs and expectations, to deepen partnerships and to raise awareness of the benefits of the commons.

Objectives:
- Create a strong public-civic partnership
- Organize events and matchmaking
- Promote the use of digital commons

**Action 2 - Smooth Access to Funding**: Digital commons often have limited resources in particular for their **maintenance**, which can hinder their **development, scaling** and **security**, even though some can be considered as strategic for the European digital sovereignty. The DC-EDIC will create the right conditions for fundraising by acting as **a facilitator and by helping stakeholders navigate the funding landscape**.

Objectives:
- Create a one-stop-shop
- Provide support and expertise for fundraising
- Coordinate call for proposals from MS

**Action 3 - Support the Maintenance, Development and Scaling of Digital Commons**: Digital commons sometimes suffer from a deficit of expertise in non-digital fields and are often the work of volunteers who have limited time. The DC-EDIC, by offering **legal and technical support**, will help them to focus on developing, maintaining and scaling their product and services.

Objectives:
- Provide advice (technical, legal, etc.)
- Provide dedicated resources (hosting, forge, etc.) and set testing and experimentation facilities for projects
- Gather technical skills for consulting

**Action 4 - Contribute to Strategic Developments of Digital Commons**: In recent years, digital regulations have been developed at national, European and international levels. The DC-EDIC will aim to play an active role in defining **how digital commons can contribute to digital priorities** by sharing its expertise in strategic discussions, and by **raising awareness on the importance of digital commons I terms of digital governance and regulation**.

Objectives:
- Strengthen advocacy for digital commons
- Enhance synergies between related EDICs

**Action 5 - Participate in Digital Commons Projects**: The DC-EDIC will aim to participate directly in **concrete digital projects already existing or to be launched**. The projects must have a **European dimension** and be **in line with characteristics of digital commons**. Projects in which Members of the DC-EDIC are already involved are more likely to be supported, to begin with.

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