DIH-WORLD
WIDENING DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS

Horizon 2020 EU Grant Agreement N° 952176

OPEN CALL FOR EXPERIMENTS 1 GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

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VERSION HISTORY

No.	Date	Author (Organisation)	Description
1	30/03/2021	CARSA	Guide for Applicants completed
1.1	02/06/2021	CARSA	Section 8 Support available for applicants: email address updated
1.1	07/06/2021	CARSA	Section 3.4 Eligibility criteria, *important remark* updated: "in Smart Anything Everywhere (SAE) and ICT innovation for Manufacturing SMEs (I4MS) initiatives."
1.1	07/06/2021	CARSA	Section 4.4 Budget and financial support updated: "per SME" changed to "per third party"

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION TO DIH-WORLD

DIH-World aims to accelerate the uptake of advanced digital technologies by European manufacturing SMEs in all sectors by supporting them in building sustainable competitive advantages and reaching global markets. To achieve this objective, the **DIH-World project consortium is launching its first open calls to select and support up to 35 SME-driven experiments**.

The DIH-World open calls are designed to support digitalisation experiments involving **DIHs and SMEs** from the manufacturing sector. Innovative experiments will receive **up to EUR 95.000,00** to support the integration of digital technologies in the processes, products or services of an SME.

DIH-World Open Calls also aim to expand the DIH-World Network, providing access to Academy training and mentoring to a large number of external DIHs, and supporting a wide range of DIH experiments with manufacturing companies and other DIHs, applying the skills learned through the Academy.

The selected innovative technology experiments will be joining the DIH-World community, boosting the interaction and cross border cooperation among DIHs and SMEs, and also among DIHs from the European Network.

The present Guide for Applicants provides detailed information on the DIH-World open call and how to apply.

2 I4MS INITIATIVE

DIH-World is an Innovation Action project co-funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union. DIH-World project is part of the ICT Innovation for Manufacturing SMEs (I4MS) initiative. More information on the I4MS initiative is available on the website: https://i4ms.eu/.

I4MS is a European initiative supporting manufacturing SMEs and mid-caps in the widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in their business operations.

3 OPEN CALL FOR EXPERIMENT

This section presents the objective of the call, the key dates, who can apply and the eligibility criteria.

3.1 Objective

DIH-World is looking for **innovative experiments across Europe** that integrates **digital technologies in the processes, products or services of manufacturing SMEs**. Innovative experiments are projects to be implemented by a consortium made of an SME and a Digital Innovation Hub.

- **Sectors:**

This first open call addresses any manufacturing sector, with special focus on:

| Wood | Food products | Construction | Maritime |

- **Technologies**

The innovative experiments are open to any of the following technologies, as far as they contribute to boost the digitalisation level of the participating SMEs:

- o Smart modelling;
- o Robotics;
- o Internet of Things;
- o Cyber Physical Systems;
- o 3D Printing;
- o Data analytics;
- o Artificial Intelligence;
- o Cloud technologies;
- o High Performance Computing;
- o Laser technologies;
- o Cognitive Autonomous Systems;
- o Human-robot interaction;
- o Cybersecurity;
- o Sensors.

3.2 Key dates

The key dates of the open call are as follows:

Activity	Dates
Launch of the call	03/05/2021
Deadline to submit proposals	15/07/2021 at 13h00 (CET)
Evaluation and selection	16/07/2021 – 15/09/2021
Contract's signature	16/09/2021 – 15/10/2021
Experiment starting month	October 2021

3.3 Who can apply?

The DIH-World open calls target **consortia of one SME from any Member State or Horizon 2020 Associated country together with one Digital Innovation Hub (DIHs)**.

SMEs: as defined in the European Commission recommendation 2003/361/EC[1], as published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 124, p. 36 of 20 May 2003.

> "The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million." Extract of Article 2 of the annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

DIHs: following the description by the European Commission website: "DIHs are one-stop shops that help companies become more competitive with regard to their business/production processes, products or services using digital technologies. DIHs provide access to technical expertise and experimentation, so that companies can "test before invest". They also provide innovation services, such as financing advice, training and skills development that are needed for a successful digital transformation"[2]

Note: SMEs and DIHs can only be selected once to carry out a DIH-World experiment to ensure the gradual widening of the network.

3.4 Eligibility criteria

In order to be considered as eligible, applicants must comply with the following:

- Based in an EU 27 Member State or Horizon 2020 Associated Countries.
- The Proposal must be submitted in English. Proposals submitted in any other language will be excluded.
- The Proposal must be submitted within the stipulated deadline.
- Complete the application following the template provided.
- Status of the organisation presenting the Proposal falls under the categories presented in section 3.3.

Important remark: All third parties have a maximum limit of EUR 100.000,00 to be received as FSTP in Smart Anything Everywhere (SAE) and ICT innovation for Manufacturing SMEs (I4MS) initiatives. This rule is applied to this Open Call.

4 INNOVATIVE EXPERIMENTS

This section presents the mandatory tasks to be carried out by the experiments, the deliverables, the expected timeline, the budget and the payment schedule.

4.1 Experiment tasks

Selected DIHs will have to participate in various mandatory activities:

- Kick-off meeting of the DIH-World selected experiments;

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[1] Source: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003H0361

[2] Source : https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-innovation-hubs-dihs-europe

- Participation in 1 individual follow-up meeting with DIH-World monitoring team;
- Preparation and delivery of a Trial Handbook;
- Participation in the Services assessment exercise;
- Creation of at least 2 dissemination materials;
- Participation at the experiment closure event with peers.

On top of the tasks required to implement the proposed experiment, selected DIHs will become members of the DIH-World community. The DIH-World community will support them to develop and define a sustainable business model and collaboration scenarios, including cross-border cooperation, and help them to develop or fine-tune their value propositions. Thus, selected DIHs will have the opportunity to participate in other project activities, beyond the experiment, such as:

- DIH-World Academy;
- Participation in DIH-World activities for the enhancement of DIH services.

Deliverables to be generated:
- Trial Handbook.
- Cost statement.

4.2 Experiment deliverables

The **Trial Handbook (THB)** is the tool used to monitor the launch and evolution of DIH-World experiments. This document will also contribute to identify possible best practices within the DIHs & SMEs participating in the project.

The Trial Handbook is the central information source for all tasks regarding the experiments, defining in detail the entire process carried out throughout the experiment and the outcomes and results of the activities performed. As such, the objective of the guide is to define, structure, coordinate and collect information regarding the experiments of the DIH-World project in a standardised manner and assess their impact.

The **cost statement (CS)** is the document to report the costs occurred during the implementation of the experiment. No detailed documents are to be provided to DIH-World in order to justify the costs of the experiment. Nevertheless, recipients of the financial support shall keep all their documents and records to allow the Commission, the European Anti-fraud Office and the Court of Auditors to exercise their powers of control, on documents, information, even stored on electronic media, or on the final recipient's premises, in line with H2020 rules.

4.3 Experiment timeline

The experiment timeline will be the following:

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Milestones	Kick-off		Individual Monitoring Meeting			Closure event
Deliverables	Ch. 1 & 2 of the THB					Complete THB Cost statement

The **follow-up meetings** will be organised in order to enable the project coordinators to monitor the progress and solve any issues occurred during the implementation of the pilot experiment.

4.4 Budget and financial support

The maximum amount to be granted per experiment will be **EUR 95.000,00**.

Budget considerations:

- **Maximum financial support for the DIHs**: up to 30% of the total requested financial support per experiment. For instance, in the case of a requested amount of EUR 95.000,00, the maximum amount for the DIH would be EUR 28.500,00.
- **Funding rate**: according to Horizon 2020, the funding rate applicability for the selected SMEs or for-profit entities will be 70% of eligible costs, for non-profit organisations it will be 100% of eligible costs. The consortium will define the requirements of the experiments in a way that will be feasible to carry out the work within the specified budget for the call.
- **Horizon 2020 SAE & I4MS Projects financial support amount limit**: please note that there is a limit of EUR. 100.000 funding per third party through the FSTP mechanism for all the Horizon 2020 SAE & I4MS Projects.

4.5 Structure of the budget

4.5.1 Direct personnel costs
'Direct personnel costs' are those related to personnel working for the beneficiary and directly linked to the experiment implementation.

4.5.2 Direct costs of subcontracting
'Direct cost of subcontracting', if necessary to implement the experiment, the beneficiaries may subcontract certain activities. The amount devoted to subcontracting activities shall be in line with the needs of the experiments.

4.5.3 Indirect costs
'Indirect costs' are costs that are not directly linked to the action implementation and therefore cannot be attributed directly to it. Indirect costs are declared on the basis of the flat-rate of 25% of the direct personnel costs.

4.6 Payments

The payment of the requested funding will be made in three rounds:

- **A pre-financing payment** will be done at the signature of the sub-grant agreement. This payment will correspond to 50% of the total requested amount.
- **An interim payment** will be done at the end of the experiment, when the complete Trial Handbook and cost statements are delivered and approved by DIH-World responsible partner. This payment will correspond to 35% of the requested amount.
- **A third and final payment** will be done at the end of the DIH-World project, in M36 after approval of EC of all DIH-World project deliverables. This payment will correspond to the remaining 15% of the amount requested.

4.7 Proposal template

The Proposal is submitted in a single stage through the EMS online platform. The template can be downloaded from the EMS platform. Applicants are asked to carefully read and follow the instructions provided in the Proposal template.

The Proposal template details what is expected from the applicants in each of the sections. Each section of the Proposal corresponds to an evaluation criterion.

The Proposal template includes the following sections:

Section	Sub-sections
1) **Excellence** (3 pages)	1.1 Objectives of the experiment 1.2 Experiment overview 1.3 Scientific and Technological Excellence
2) **Impact** (3 pages)	2.1 Expected impact on the SME 2.2 Expected impact on the DIH 2.3 Dissemination and exploitation plan 2.4 Cross-border activities
3) **Implementation** (4 pages)	3.1 Work Plan 3.2 Budget of the experiment 3.3 Consortium presentation

Further details on what is expected in each sub-section is indicated in the proposal template.

In addition to the application form, applicants are welcome to support their application by providing the following annexes on the platform:

- **Annex I: Additional documentation to support the Proposal experiment** (not mandatory)

5 WHAT IS IN DIH-WORLD FOR YOU?

5.1 What's in for the consortium?

The selected consortia will benefit from:

- Financial support of **up to EUR 95.000 per experiment**;
- Support for the DIH development through the DIH Academy;
- A community of DIHs and SMEs willing to strengthen collaboration and learn from each other.

5.2 What's in for SMEs?

Through the DIH-World experiments, SMEs will receive financial support to integrate digital technologies and transform their processes, products or services to remain competitive.

5.3 What's in for DIHs?

DIH-World aims at providing DIHs access to harmonised tools, well proven technologies, effective methodologies, sound knowledge, smart investment sources, rich training assets and overall a vibrant innovation environment to bring the DIHs to the next level.
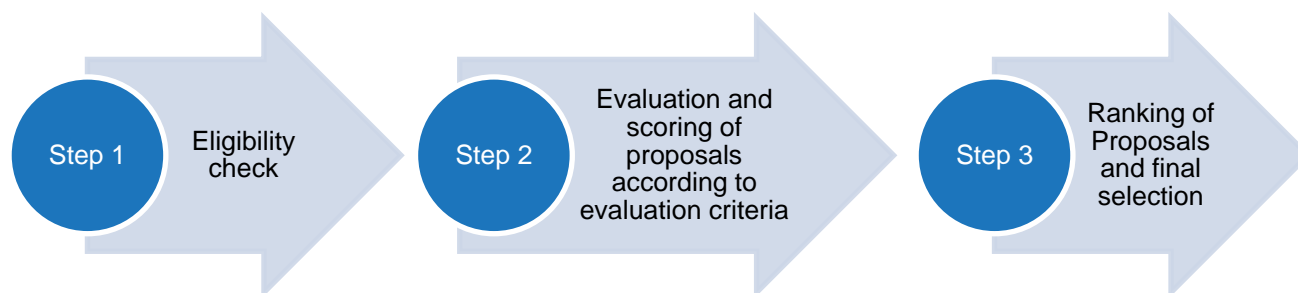
DIHs will support SMEs in integrating digital technologies in their processes, products or services through the experiment while joining the DIH-World DIH Academy. The selected DIHs will receive tailored training / coaching in line with the various dimensions of their business model, ensuring both quick wins and long-term sustainability.

The objectives of the DIH-World Academy are to: develop and support DIHs to help them to define a sustainable business model and to support DIH collaboration, including cross-border cooperation, and help them to develop or fine-tune their value propositions.

6 EVALUATION AND SELECTION

6.1 Overall process

The proposals received will go through the following evaluation process:

The steps are briefly described in the sub-sections below.

6.2 Step 1: Eligibility check

All Proposals received go through the automatic eligibility check. The eligibility check ensures that the criteria presented in section 3.4 are met. Criteria are the following:

- Based in an EU 27 Member State or Horizon 2020 associated countries.
- The Proposal must be submitted in English. Proposals submitted in any other language will be excluded.
- The Proposal must be submitted within the stipulated deadline.
- Complete the application following the template provided.
- Status of the organisation presenting the Proposal falls under the categories presented in section 3.3.

6.3 Step 2: Evaluation

The following table presents the evaluation criteria.

Small consortiums including 1 SME and 1 DIH that want to receive financial support shall submit a proposal to the open call. The proposal will have a maximum of 10 pages, excluding annexes. The best proposals complying with the following criteria will be awarded for financial support:

Table 1. Evaluation criteria description

Evaluation criteria	Description
1) Excellence (3 pages)	• Define clear objectives. • Demonstrate alignment with DIH-World objectives. • Address the sectors and technologies of DIH-World open call. • Develop a sound and ambitious experiment. • Provide a clear description of the challenge the experiment plans to overcome. • Demonstrate innovation capacity to improve the current processes, products or services.
2) Impact (3 pages)	• Contribute to increase the digitalisation level of the SME. • Demonstrate clear technological, economic and commercial impacts. • Set clear and realistic KPIs. • Contribute to the goals of the DIH. • Develop an appropriate dissemination and exploitation plan.
3) Implementation (4 pages)	• Develop a coherent and clear work plan; • Have the required capacity to carry out the experiment (budget). • Demonstrate capacity to carry out the experiment (personnel, infrastructure); • Demonstrate the appropriateness of the consortium members.

Each proposal will be evaluated by two evaluators against the criteria outlined above. Each evaluator will record his/her individual opinion on each proposal using the evaluation form. They will then communicate in order to reach consensus on the quality of each proposal. The result of that agreement (comments and scores) will be reflected on the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), which will be signed by both. Only proposals with scores above thresholds for each criterion, as indicated below, will be retained for funding. Once ESRs of all proposals are completed, DIH-World partners will have a meeting in order to rank all the proposals and create a shortlist of maximum 35 proposals, which will finally be proposed to receive funding. The rest of the approved proposals will be included in a reserve list.

The evaluation will be carried out by experts who are completely independent from the applicants. These experts will be individuals with experience and knowledge in the fields of digital technologies and the implementation of digital strategies.

When preparing the ranking, if two or more proposals are tied with the same overall score, priority will be given as illustrated in table below. The second criterion will have a threshold of 4, while for the first and third a threshold of 3 will apply. This means that Impact will be the most important criterion.

The thresholds and priorities given to each criterion are the following:

Table 2. Criteria thresholds and priority

Criterion	Threshold	Priority (in case of ex-aequo)
Excellence	3	2
Impact	4	1
Implementation	3	3

The following table details the evaluation scores for each criterion:

Table 3. Evaluation scores

Score	Description
0. Fail	The Proposal fully fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
1. Poor	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses that will impede success.
2. Fair	While the Proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would hinder the project implementation.
3. Good	The Proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary and various details are missing on implementation.
4 Very Good	The Proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible and some particular details are missing on implementation.
5. Excellent	The Proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

All activities proposed should respect fundamental ethical principles, including those reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. If any issues with these fundamental ethical principles are identified while the Proposal is being evaluated the initiative will take any measures deemed appropriate in order to deal with the situation.

6.4 Step 3: Ranking of proposals and final selection

The result of this evaluation is a ranking of the proposals according to the obtained scores. The final selection will ensure diversity in terms of sectors and geographical coverage.
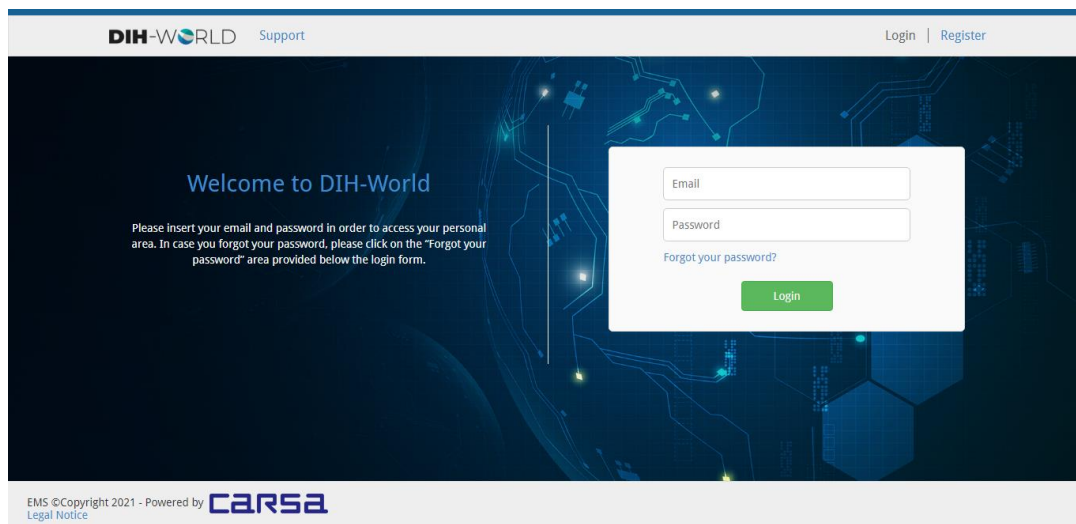
Once the evaluation process is completed for all Proposals, applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, will receive a notice on the outcome of the evaluation and their Evaluation Summary Report.

7 SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL ON THE EMS PLATFORM

The proposals will be submitted digitally in a single-stage through the Evaluation Management System (EMS). The supporting documentation, including the proposal template, as well as the EMS guide for proposal registration, can be downloaded from the online platform once the applicant has been registered. Applicants are kindly asked to read and follow the instructions provided carefully.

Proposals prepared according to the instructions provided, shall be submitted electronically through the EMS platform. Applicants should follow the steps starting from the DIH-World EMS website (https://dihworld.ems-carsa.com/login).

Figure 1. EMS platform overview

Once the proposal is completed, click "Submit". Applicants will have the chance to submit new versions of their Proposal as many times as they wish before the call closure. Only the last version submitted before the deadline will be considered in the evaluation.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent out via email to all successfully submitted Proposals, as soon as possible after the closure of the call. However, this receipt will not be proof that the Proposal is eligible for evaluation.

8 SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR APPLICANTS

In addition to the present Guide for Applicants, the following tools are available to support applicants:

- **Frequently Asked Questions**

A Frequently Asked Questions document is available on the website. The document will be periodically updated to reflect the questions received.

- **Newsletters and webinars**

Subscribe to the DIH-World newsletter on the website and get to know about the webinars that will be organised to support you in preparing a successful Proposal.

- **Helpdesk**

Applicants may contact the DIH-World helpdesk should they wish to receive further information on the Call for Proposal content and conditions:

Email address: info@dihworld.eu

— Consortium —

Core partners

CARSA   pwc   KEARNEY | IMP³ROVE   innovalia ASSOCIATION   eurada   cbt

DIHs

AIT AUSTRIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY   FLANDERS MAKE   DigiTecH   SIMORA   CYRIC   CZECH INSTITUTE OF INFORMATICS ROBOTICS AND CYBERNETICS CTU IN PRAGUE

DANISH TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE   TALTECH   UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND   images & réseaux   DIGITAL.HUB LOGISTICS   LMS Laboratory for Manufacturing Systems & Automation

STEPP   CeADAR Ireland's Centre for Applied AI   ELEKTRONIKAS UN DATORZINĀTŅU INSTITŪTS INSTITUTE OF ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE   LUXEMBOURG DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB   DIH OCEAN TECHNOLOGY   Łukasiewicz IMiF

UNINOVA   FIT DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB   DIH Science City   DIH @ UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR   AIR INSTITUTE   cidihub CANARY ISLANDS DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY   SWISS SMART FACTORY SWITZERLAND INNOVATION PARK BIEL/BIENNE   MEDIS DIH Distretto Meccatronico Regionale e Digital Innovation Hub della Puglia

SMEs involved in the pilot experiments

CAPSULE SKATEBOARDS   FOMATEC FOREST MACHINE TECHNOLOGY   TRANSVISION V-TEST – Digital Services for Smart Homes   SMARTFACTORY EFFICIENCY THROUGH INNOVATION   aersea AERIAL & SEA WORKS   MACHINE prognostics.

BODEGAS MONJE EL SAUZAL - TENERIFE   PAGO DE CARRAOVEJAS FINCA Y BODEGA