



KDT JU launches 2021 Work Programme and first calls

Paris, 16 December 2021- The KDT JU has announced its 2021 Work Programme and first calls. Calls-2021 on 16 December 2021 and proposals for Calls-2021 will need to be submitted by 27 April 2022.

This announcement follows the adoption of the Single Basic Act and the publication in the Official Journal of the [Council Regulation \(EU\) 2021/2085](#), establishing ten European Joint Undertakings (JUs), including the Key Digital Technologies (KDT) JU, on 30 November 2021.

KDT is the successor to the ECSEL (Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership) JU which ran from 2014-2020. The former ECSEL JU Office has now become the KDT JU Office, and the first calls are open.

- **Call-2021** opens on 16 December 2021 with a deadline of 27 April 2022, and selected projects to be started by end of 2022
- **Call-2022** expected to be launched mid-2022 with a deadline after the summer break 2022 and selected projects to be started by end of 2023

The KDT partnership is part of the Horizon Europe EU Programme for Research and Innovation established within the EU's Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2021-2027 (the seven-year budget of the EU). It is one of ten JUs – tri-partite EU, national authorities and private sector – funding instruments designed to accelerate the transition to a green and digital Europe.

KDT: global funding

In terms of funding, KDT will receive up to €1.8 billion from the EU, a steep increase over the €1.2 billion for ECSEL.

Matching investments i.e., up to €1.8 billion will come from participating states, namely: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Additional participating states may join during the existence of KDT JU.

The total R&I project volume should reach more than €7 billion.



KDT Calls 2021 content and budget

Action		Estimated EU Expenditure (M€)
Call 2021-1 IA	General according to SRIA 2021	108.0 M€
Call 2021-1-IA-Focus Topic	Development of open-source RISC-V building blocks	20.0 M€
Call 2021-2 RIA	General according to SRIA 2021	50.0 M€
Call 2021-2-RIA-Focus Topic 1	Processing solutions for AI at the edge addressing the design stack and middleware	20.0 M€
Call 2021-3-CSA	A Pan-European chip infrastructure for design innovation	10.0 M€
	Total	208.0 M€

The Participating States budget should match the EU budget.

All details of the calls can be found in the [Work Programme 2021](#) and in the [ECS SRIA 2021](#) as it has been adopted as the KDT 2021 SRIA.

The opening of the submission tools in the Funding and Tenders portal is estimated on 18 January 2022.

Definition of ‘key digital technologies’

Within KDT, the term ‘key digital technologies’ refers to electronic components and systems that underpin all major economic sectors. “They encompass electronic components, as well as their design, manufacture and integration in systems and the software that defines how they work.” As such, KDT will go beyond the scope of ECSEL to cover electronic and photonic (light-based technologies) components, as well as software. It will also expand the value-chain coverage and involve users more strongly.



Objectives

Like all the new JUs, KDT has an overarching objective to support the [digital transformation](#) of all economic and societal sectors and the [European Green Deal](#). More specifically, it will support R&I in:

- addressing clearly defined topics that would enable European industries at large to design, manufacture and use the most innovative technologies in electronic components and systems
- supporting R&D for design and production capabilities for strategic application areas
- enabling fast transfer of technologies from research to industry support R&D in component technologies that guarantee security, trust and energy-efficiency for critical infrastructures and sectors.

Besides reinforcing the EU's strategic autonomy in ECS to support vertical industries and the wider economy, KDT has quantified targets, among them:

- contributing towards doubling the value of the design and production of ECS in Europe by 2030 (in line with the weight of the Union in products and services)
- establishing scientific excellence and innovation leadership in emerging components and systems technologies, including in lower TRLs
- promoting involvement of SMEs, who will represent at least one third of the total number of participants in indirect actions with at least 20 % of public funding going to them
- aligning with EU policy on energy efficiency and contributing towards the reduction of energy consumption by 32.5 % in 2030.

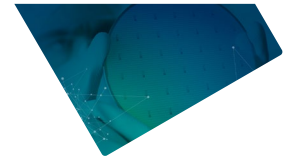
The EU believes “structured and coordinated financial support” from JUs is necessary to ensure that European industry and research maintain current their strengths, and to “close the gap in technologies that are critical for a digital transformation in Europe that reflects core Union values including privacy and trust, security and safety.”

Strengthening ecosystems and SME participation

To achieve these goals, the JUs aim to “accelerate the deployment, uptake and diffusion of innovative solutions, technologies, services and skills in reinforced European R&I ecosystems and industrial ecosystems, including through wide and early engagement and co-creation with end-users, including SMEs and start-ups, citizens and regulatory and standardization bodies”.

The ambition to stimulate R&I activities in SMEs has a key role to play. The KDT JU will seek to “foster a dynamic Union-wide ecosystem based on digital value-chains with simplified access to newcomers” including SMEs in emerging and adjacent areas of technology.

And more broadly, the HE programme will promote cooperation and coordination among all ten of the HE European partnerships to exploit synergies across activities and stakeholders of all kinds.



Role of AENEAS Industry Associations

The three industry associations (IAs) have been involved in co-defining KDT together with the European Commission and the Member States since September 2019. With KDT underway, they will continue to represent the private members partnering in the KDT JU with the EC and the Participating States.

All three have a seat on the KDT Governing Board, the JU decision-making body responsible for its strategic orientation and coherence with relevant EU objectives and policies. The IAs have one third of the voting rights, with the Commission having another third, and the final third going to the participating states. The industry associations also continue to jointly develop the ECS Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (ECS-SRIA), which has been adopted by KDT and which ensures coherence with EU policies.

KDT will build on many of the successes of the ECSEL JU. ECSEL not only involved 16 calls, 92 projects and over 3,100 participants over a seven-year period, but also helped to increase EU ECS production from 6% to nearly 10% of the global total over a five-year period¹.

The challenge and opportunity for KDT is go further to establish Europe as a world leader in key digital technologies and to support Europe in its green and digital transition. It will strengthen the resilience and competitiveness of the European industry, and work towards “... objectives and outcomes that can be achieved by 2030 ... ” and that make “a clear contribution” to related EU policy priorities and have a clear impact for citizens based on a shared strategic vision.

About AENEAS: <https://aeneas-office.org>

AENEAS is an Industry Association, established in 2006. The purpose of the association is to promote Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) in order to strengthen the competitiveness of European industry across the complete Electronics Components and Systems (ECS) value chain. AENEAS provides unparalleled networking opportunities, policy influence & supported access to funding to all types of RD&I participants in the field of micro and nanoelectronics enabled components and systems, and its applications. Partner in ECSEL JU and the new KDT JU, AENEAS is also operating the EUREKA funded Clusters Xecs, PENTA and EURIPIDES².

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/key-digital-technologies-new-partnership-help-speed-transition-green-and-digital-europe>