ADDITIONAL JOINT CALL 2026
DIGITALISATION OF ENERGY SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS

ENERDIGIT

CALL TEXT

FINAL VERSION

(VERSION V1.0)

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[1] RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE EUROPEAN FORUM FOR MEMBER STATES (EFMS) ON PUBLIC POLICIES FOR SECURITY AND RESILIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF CRITICAL INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION, Version 3.0 FINAL – May 2011 "Traffic Light System"

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1. TIMELINE OF THE JOINT CALL 2026

This document is an invitation to respond to the Joint Call 2026 on digitalisation of energy systems and networks projects. The total available budget is 2 000 000 €

Call opening	23 February 2026
Launch and matchmaking event	9 March 2026 14:00 – 15:30 CET
Recommended advisory period	23. February 2026 - 7. May 2026
Proposal submission deadline	7. May 2026, 14:00 CEST
National or regional eligibility checks and expert evaluation period	End May 2026
Selection period	June 2026
Deadline funding decision feedback	End June 2026
Expected project start	September – October 2026

Project proposals must be submitted electronically. More information about the call and the online Electronic Submission System can be found at the ERA-Net SES website: Joint Call 2026.

The **Submission System is called INSIGHTS** and is administrated by NordForsk and Nordic Energy Research. Nordic Energy Research is Call Management for this Joint Call 2026, and will assist with all submission system inquiries.

2. BACKGROUND

The digitalisation of the energy sector is a key enabler for Europe's clean energy transition. Achieving a climate-neutral, secure, and resilient energy system requires not only the deployment of renewable energy sources but also robust IT infrastructures that enable secure and efficient data exchange across actors, sectors, and borders.

Today, energy data is often collected and managed in isolated systems, limiting its use for coordination, optimisation, and innovation. To overcome this fragmentation, **interoperable IT frameworks composed of modular software services**—such as authorisation, authentication, cybersecurity, and metadata management—are essential. These services form the foundation for real-time observability, control, and market participation across electricity, mobility, and other sectors.

Building on existing European and national digital infrastructures, this Call aims to **develop, and validate scalable software solutions** that enable multi-lateral data exchange

and cross-sector integration, in line with the objectives of the European Green Deal[2], Fit-for-55[3], and the Digital Decade[4]. The goal is to strengthen Europe's capability to operate interoperable digital energy infrastructures supporting a clean and secure energy transition.

3. PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

The countries participating in the Joint Call 2026 consists of a subset of national and regional funding partners from the ERA-Net Smart Energy Systems (ERA-Net SES) EnerDigit initiative. An overview of participating countries is shown below (Figure 1).

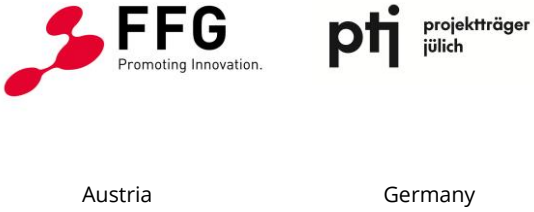

Figure 1: Additional Joint Call 2026 on Digitalisation of Energy Systems and Networks participating countries.

4. AIM, SCOPE & TOPICS OF THE JOINT CALL 2026

4.1 AIM

This Call will fund a **pilot aimed at developing a software-based IT framework** for use in the energy sector, consisting of modular services that enable interoperable connection of ICT systems at multi-lateral and cross-sector levels.

The aim of the pilot consists of demonstrating the potential for **multi-lateral data sharing** by building on existing solutions from other sectors—such as healthcare, mobility, and public administration—to show the benefits and added value of a **large-scale EU-wide IT framework**.

The focus lies on **software development, architecture design, and validation**. While direct end-user services are not the primary scope, but representative user feedback should be integrated where relevant to ensure that the framework can effectively support future operational and market applications.

To ensure maximum impact, this call aims at funding a **single, large-scale pilot project**[5] that lays the foundation for **gradual, stepwise expansion and cross-sector integration**. Applicants are expected to use the available resources of the participating countries in a target-oriented and effective manner.

[2] https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en
[3] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fit-for-55/
[4] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade
[5] If there is the possibility of funding further projects, these may also be selected. Close cooperation of the projects is then a prerequisite.

The pilot IT framework of software services aims to validate multi-lateral data exchange mechanisms through a selected demonstration Use Case (see Section 4.3 TOPICS), building on existing solutions and experiences wherever possible. It will serve as a blueprint for the architecture and services required in the energy sector, ensuring future cross-sector interoperability. Key concepts such as authorisation, authentication, and cybersecurity must be considered by design

4.2 SCOPE

The proposals must be based on a holistic approach and avoid isolated solutions. Several sectors in Europe have already made significant progress towards interoperable digital infrastructures:

- **Healthcare** with *myHealth@EU*[6] and the *eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure (eHDSI)*, enabling secure exchange of medical data across borders;
- **Public administration** with *eIDAS*[7], *Once-Only Principle*[8],*The Once.Only Technical Service*[9] and *CEF Building Blocks*[10],[11], providing reusable components for identification, trust services, and data exchange;
- **Transport and mobility** through initiatives such as *NAPCORE*[12] and *iSHARE*[13], and SIMPL[14] harmonising data access and interoperability across European transport networks.
- **Data infrastructure and cloud ecosystems** with GAIA-X[15], providing a federated, interoperable framework for cross-sector data exchange.

These examples demonstrate that cross-border digital interoperability is achievable and provides long-term benefits once a shared framework is in place. The call aims to develop a **software-based pilot** that leverages experiences from other sectors, reuses proven components, and designs interfaces for seamless integration.

The project will establish a pilot network of nodes representing organisations that provide, manage, or consume energy data, as well as IT service providers, interconnected via modular digital services. The focus is on **developing and validating software-based IT frameworks** that enable interoperability across systems and sectors. Direct end-user services are not the primary focus.

Please note: the scope of the pilot concerns the **implementation of the communication framework** among the stakeholders, not the implementation of the business logic or the physical processes of the demonstration use cases.

[6] https://health.ec.europa.eu/ehealth-digital-health-and-care/digital-health-and-care/electronic-cross-border-health-services_en
[7] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/discover-eidas
[8] https://commission.europa.eu/news-and-media/news/once-only-principle-system-breakthrough-eus-digital-single-market-2020-11-05_en
[9] https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/digital-building-blocks/solution/once-only-technical-system-oots
[10] https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/connecting-europe-facility_en
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-building-blocks/sites/spaces/DIGITAL/overview
[12] https://napcore.eu/
[13] https://ishare.eu/
[14] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/simpl
[15] https://gaia-x.eu/

4.3 TOPICS

To validate the developed IT framework, the implementation and evaluation of a **demonstration use case** is mandatory: **communication in the infrastructure for charging stations (heavy-duty vehicle or public charging)**, enabling the data exchange between the fleet management, charging point operators (CPO) and grid operators for the provision or request of forecasts and ancillary services to and from the electricity grid through secure data exchange and integration. This demonstration use case should include:

- multi-lateral identification of electric vehicles,
- communication of charging point availability and reservation, and
- interaction between charging infrastructure and the electricity grid for the provision/request of forecasts and ancillary services.

Cross-sector data exchange between the energy and mobility sectors is particularly relevant in light of current European strategies and developments, therefore the projects are expected to establish a collaboration with relevant initiatives, exchange ideas, and adopt or expand existing approaches. Key European activities include:

- **CEEDS**[16] **(Common European Energy Data Space)** – Provides standardized data models, exchange APIs, and governance frameworks to enable secure, interoperable energy data sharing, cross-sector integration, renewable integration, distributed energy management, and optimization of electricity grids.
- **EDDIE**[17] - A Horizon Europe-funded initiative to build a decentralised open-source data-space for energy across Europe, enabling standardized, cross-sector and cross-border access to energy data via modular software services.
- **INSIEME**[18] – Connects national energy data platforms into a Common European Energy Data Space (CEEDS), developing standardised data exchange, security protocols, and governance frameworks, and piloting interoperable energy data sharing across multiple EU countries.
- **SEEG / D4E**[19] **(Smart Energy Expert Group / Data for Energy)** – Offers guidance and best practices for energy data access, usage, and multi-lateral exchange, supporting the development of a European energy data ecosystem.

Additional cooperation with other initiatives and projects may be pursued by the project partners to maximise synergies.

Existing standards and regulations must be taken into account. The project shall also demonstrate **scalability** across Europe and provide evidence of the added value of multi-lateral energy data exchange.

Proposals must include:

- Definition of the demonstration use case (including necessary energy datasets) to validate the added value of multi-lateral, standardised data exchange;

[16] https://energy.ec.europa.eu/publications/common-european-energy-data-space_en
[17] https://eddie.energy/
[18] https://insieme.energy/index.html
[19] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupID=3926&fromCallsApplication=true

- Definition of functional, and non-functional requirements for an IT framework enabling EU-wide standardised energy data exchange;
- Design of the architecture and specifications for the building blocks (nodes and central services), based on experience from other sectors, enabling EU-wide data use;
- Re-use of existing European and national IT infrastructures wherever possible (see Scope);
- Development, customisation, or integration of technology to meet the agreed requirements and specifications;
- Execution of the selected Use Case over the implemented IT framework for validation.

5. RESULTS AND EXPECTED IMPACT

5.1 RESULTS

The **expected results** will explicitly build on and contribute to ongoing European initiatives for digital energy infrastructures. The pilot is expected to strengthen alignment with EU interoperability frameworks, open data standards, and cross-sector integration objectives, and to provide reusable results that can be taken up beyond the project duration. The funded projects are expected to deliver:

- Clearly defined **requirements, architecture, and specifications** for modular IT and data framework building blocks enabling EU-wide energy data use, in line with the European Interoperability Reference Architecture (EIRA)[20] and the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) [21];
- A **functioning pilot IT framework**, deployed and validated across at least two European countries, demonstrating multi-lateral and cross-sector data exchange in practice;
- **Reusable and open-source software components**, developed, tested, and operated with a sufficient number of nodes to demonstrate scalability, flexibility, and cross-sector integration.

For the implementation of the results, it is expected that the projects:

- Reuse **CEF Building Blocks** and open standards wherever applicable;
- Apply **DCAT-AP**[22] for dataset discovery and metadata-level interoperability;
- Use relevant **SAREF**[23] **ontologies** (e.g. SAREF4ENER, SAREF4AUTO) to ensure semantic interoperability across energy and mobility domains;
- Make all results available under a **permissive open-source licence**, enabling uptake by future European initiatives and national implementations.

[20] https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/european-interoperability-reference-architecture-eira
[21] https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/eif_en/
[22] https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/semic-support-centre/solution/dcat-application-profile-data-portals-europe
[23] https://saref.etsi.org/

5.2 IMPACT

Experience from other sectors, particularly healthcare, shows that developing such an IT framework is most effective when **starting with a specific, well-defined use case while maintaining a modular and scalable design**. Considering interoperability from the outset ensures **scalability, replicability, and maintainability** across systems and countries.

The transnational nature of ERA-Net EnerDigit provides a unique opportunity to establish a **sustainable and widely accepted European solution**. The pilot project will demonstrate the potential and added value of an **EU-wide IT framework** for multi-lateral data exchange, complement ongoing European initiatives, and serve as a **blueprint for future applications** across energy, mobility, and other sectors.

The successful proposal should include well-designed dissemination and exploitation plans for reaching key stakeholders and next-step actors as well as a readily deployable roadmap for bringing on the next steps of the developed IT framework solution towards EU-implementation and extension with additional use cases.

6. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND MANDATORY CRITERIA

6.1 REQUIREMENTS

A proposal under the 2026 joint call should identify and address critical challenges in the digitalisation process of the energy sector. It is strongly recommended involving relevant stakeholders in all project phases to maximise market acceptance in the development of the solution. In particular, the interests of regulators, fleet operators, grid operators and charging point operators must be covered, preferably through active participation or other forms of cooperation.
To ensure a high-quality pilot, proposals must:

1. **Identify key needs and challenges** related to cross-sector and cross-border energy data exchange, involving relevant system actors (“need-owners”) such as fleet managers, charging point operators, grid operators, data holders, mobility actors, and public authorities.
2. **Describe processes and methods** for requirements engineering, co-creation, and collaboration between technical partners and need-owners, ensuring that operational, semantic, and technical interoperability needs are addressed from the outset.
3. **Use and build upon existing European digital infrastructures**, standards, and platforms (e.g., CEF Building Blocks, DCAT-AP, SAREF, CEEDS-related components) rather than developing isolated or redundant solutions.
4. **Provide a strategy for scaling, replicating, and transferring** the developed IT framework across Europe, including open-source publication, dissemination activities, and alignment with ongoing European initiatives.

5. **Demonstrate added value from transnational collaboration**, showing how the consortium structure enhances the development, validation, and European uptake of the framework.

The proposals must demonstrate added value from international cooperation and effectively utilize the available resources of the participating agencies, compared to national projects. This should be evident in the layout and execution of the work packages. The work plan must show real cooperation and project outputs are expected to provide benefits to all partner countries. Synergies with other relevant national or international projects, current and concluded, should be described in the project proposals.

6.2 MANDATORY CRITERIA

The following criteria apply for project proposals in the Joint Call 2026:

- **Transnationality:**
  Consortia must include at least two independent legal entities that apply for funding from both funding agencies resp. countries participating in the Joint Call 2026.
  Consortia must be balanced in partner distribution and budget, and no single partner may request more than 70% of the total funding. Effective utilisation of available resources is recommended. If a partner is ineligible, the consortium must still fulfil the minimum transnationality requirement. If partners in the consortium are deemed ineligible for funding by the involved funding agencies, the minimum number of participating countries must be met.

- **TRL level:**
  Projects must develop digital solutions, methods, and interoperability components for energy system data exchange. TRLs may range from 3 to 7 depending on the nature of the digital components. Lower TRLs may be included where they contribute to higher-level integration or validation. Projects must demonstrate complementarity to existing European initiatives and avoid duplication of running or recently completed efforts.

- **Dimensions of innovation:**
  The **dimensions of innovation** encompassing the dimensions *technologies and infrastructures*, *integration and organisation* and *transformation and change* (see Annex A) should be considered in the project proposal.

- **Equality and diversity perspectives:**
  Equality and diversity perspectives related not only to gender, but also ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, physical abilities, political beliefs, geography etc. throughout the project should be considered and included in all proposals. Proposals should therefore be gender balanced, especially among the personnel named in the proposal primarily responsible for carrying out the research and innovation activities. In addition to equality amongst the project participants, diversity perspectives should also be included as an integrated part of the project research.

- **Climate impact of project implementation:**
  Projects must outline execution plans that achieve high efficiency and transnational collaboration while minimizing climate impact.

- **Knowledge Community participation**
  A project funded under this Call must participate in the joint Knowledge Community activities carried out within the CETPartnership Knowledge Community (CETPartnership). The mandatory Knowledge Community work package (see Annex E – Knowledge Community standard work package) must be included in all proposals.

Please consider that the Joint Call 2026 Call Management may discard applications given the following conditions:

- Incomplete proposals where substantial parts of the application are missing
- Submissions submitted after the deadline or without using the Electronic Submission System
- If the proposal does not fulfil the transnationality requirement

Discarded applications will not be forwarded to eligibility checks or expert evaluation.

National eligibility criteria must be respected in addition to the Joint Call 2026 project requirements.
A summary of national eligibility requirements is provided under Annex B. It is essential that applicants familiarise themselves with their respective funding agency's rules.
It is highly recommended contacting the respective national contact points during the advisory period for clarifications prior to submitting a full project proposal.

7. GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

7.1 CALL PROCEDURE

The call procedure has three steps;

- the proposal phase
- the eligibility check and evaluation phase
- the selection phase

During the **proposal phase**, there will be a compulsory advisory period for all potential project applicants. During the advisory period, the project applicants are encouraged to seek support and guidance from their respective national or regional funding agencies. This is to increase the suitability of the projects with respect to national and regional requirements.

During the **eligibility and evaluation phase**, the project proposals will be subjected to an eligibility check of formal requirements, national or regional eligibility check, and a transnational independent expert evaluation. The project proposals must include all necessary information and documentation, as well as any information needed to fulfil

national or regional requirements. If these formal requirements are not met, the project proposal will not pass the evaluation phase. The different steps of the evaluation are described in more detail in the following sections (7.1.1 – 7.1.3).

The timeline of the call procedure is described in Section 1.

7.1.1 SUBMISISON OF PROJECT PROPOSAL

The project proposal phase opens on 23 February 2026. Consortia are required to submit their registration of interests and project proposals and any supporting documents in English via the Electronic Submission System, available on the ERA-Net SES website.

The submission system is called INSIGHTS and is administrated by NordForsk and Nordic Energy Research.
Text and page limits are set within the Electronic Submission System, and applicants are advised to include information only directly relevant to this call to preserve focus, structure, and clarity in the application.

The deadline for submission of the project proposals via the Electronic Submission System is 7 May 2026 at 14:00 CEST.

Please note that the national funding agencies require **additional documentation** from the project partners according to national regulations. These should ***not*** be submitted in the central Electronic Submission System, but **directly to the relevant funding agency through their national submission system. Please consult your national funding agency regarding this issue during the advisory periods.** It is the responsibility of each individual project partner to ensure that all the necessary documents are submitted on time to the appropriate recipient.

7.1.2 ADVISORY PERIOD

We strongly advice applicants to contact their respective national or regional funding agencies during the proposal submission period.

The applicants may receive feedback on their proposed project ideas from their individual national or regional funding agency in terms of scope, eligibility of partners and relevance of the project proposal depending on national regulations. This will give the project partners the opportunity to revise their ideas and re-evaluate the participating partners and obtain necessary national or regional funding agency requirements information.

The national contact points may provide information on the national or regional requirements for the project proposals, such as the potential requirement to submit a full *national or regional* proposal (i.e. in the national funding agencies' submission system and language, adhering to national or regional regulations). Each project partner is responsible for the preparation and submission of all required documents according to their respective national or regional funding agency's eligibility rules. The advice given by the funding agencies to the project partners is non-binding. The advice provided does not engage the funding agencies with respect to acceptance or rejection of the project proposal.

7.1.3 EVALUATION AND ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

The evaluation criteria are built upon three main criteria:

a. Excellence
b. Impact
c. Quality and efficiency of the implementation

For a more detailed explanation of each criterion, please see Annex C – Evaluation criteria. The roles and activities of each partner within a project consortium should be clearly described and manageability of the consortium is key.

The evaluation and eligibility process comprise three steps, which are explained in detail below:

1. Eligibility check

The Call Management will perform an eligibility check of formal requirements.
The national or regional funding agencies will consider the proposals based on specific national or regional requirements (Annex B – National/regional requirements).

2. Transnational evaluation of the project proposals

In the evaluation phase a panel of at least three independent experts will evaluate each project proposal, based solely on the evaluation criteria specific to the Joint Call 2026. Each independent expert will first individually evaluate the assigned project proposals. Afterwards, the experts will meet to form a consensus evaluation. This process will be overseen by an independent observer. The consensus evaluation will result in a ranked list of project proposals.
All evaluators and observers selected are required to declare their independence to the projects to avoid conflict of interest. They must adhere to the confidentiality conditions of the evaluation process.

3. ERA-Net SES selection and outcome

The final step of the evaluation process is a joint meeting of the Joint Call 2026 consortium to select projects for funding in consideration of the ranked list from the independent experts. Eligible projects must be above average. The outcome will be reported to the applicants by end of June 2026.

7.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

Handling of project proposals and any information relating to them will be kept confidential in accordance with the applicable national or regional regulations. Project proposals will not be used for any purpose other than the evaluation of the applications, funding decisions, monitoring of the projects and mandatory reporting to the European Commission.

7.3 CONSORTIA

To aid applicants in forming project consortia, the ERA-Net SES initiative will host a webinar in which applicants may receive answers to questions.

Consortia may be constructed from at least two active partners from both countries participating in the Joint Call 2026. They must abide by the requirements previously indicated as well as the regional or national requirements in Annex B.

Partners from countries that are not members of Joint Call 2026 can join the project consortium. In case the consortium should decide to choose this option, refer to Annex B for more details AND contact the funding agency financing the call in order to be informed about the exact procedure and requirements.
The project partners are required to sign a consortium agreement to agree on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and other relevant issues dealing with responsibilities within the project and exploitation of results. They should ensure that the agreements are not in conflict with the regulations of the relevant national or regional funding agencies. Model consortium agreements can be found at https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/regional-helpdesks/european-ip-helpdesk/europe-useful-documents_en. The Consortium Agreement is not required to be signed prior to the application deadline but is required for funded projects.

7.4 FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The total funding available for Joint Call 2026 projects is 2 000 000 Mio €. Funding of eligible costs will have to comply with national rules – see Annex B.

Funding partners			
Country/ region	**Funding (€)**	**Organisation name**	**Acronym**
Austria	1 000 000	The Austrian Research Promotion Agency	FFG
Germany	1 000 000	Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH – Projektträger Jülich (PtJ)	PtJ
Total sum	2 000 000		

7.5 PROJECT DURATION

Projects are required to start as soon as possible and no later than October 2026. The recommended duration is 36 months. The minimum allowed duration of a project is 24 months.

7.6 PROJECT MONITORING AND EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Each project partner will be responsible for the necessary reporting to their funding agency according to national or regional rules. Yearly reports are required to obtain and maintain funding during the lifetime of their portion of the project. Apart from the national or regional project review, the transnational cooperation aspects will be monitored on the ERA-Net Smart Energy System level.

Any substantial change in an on-going project must be reported immediately to Call Management and Call Management will contact officially the funding agencies involved. Project partners should be aware that changes may have implications on past, present and planned future funding.

In addition to the national or regional requirements, the additional Joint Call 2026 projects are required to deliver the following:

1. A publishable and public final project report, which describes the activities and outcomes of the work. This should include an exploitation plan that states how the results of the project will be used.
2. Participation in and presentation at Knowledge Community meetings to report on the status of and results from the project. Detailed requirements for the contribution at these seminars will be specified in due course.

Applicants should be aware of the core ideas of the Knowledge Community. Active participation in knowledge-sharing and formative reporting and monitoring activities organised by the Knowledge Community Management must be considered (e.g., in terms of resource allocation) when planning and managing the project workplan, set-up and budget. See Annex E – Knowledge Community standard work package.

ANNEX A – DIMENSIONS OF INNOVATION

To reach the goals and desired impacts of the additional Joint Call 2026 ERA NET encourages the funded projects to broaden their scope from technologies, infrastructures and system solutions to their integration, through a holistic, transdisciplinary, cross-sectoral and transformative approach, for a successful clean energy transition. It means to bring together different stakeholders, foster innovation ecosystems for reconfiguring the energy system of the future, and to overcome the fragmented research and innovation land-scape (e.g. siloed infrastructures, inclusion of Social Sciences and Humanities research, ….). The approach can be visualised in three dimensions of transformative innovations

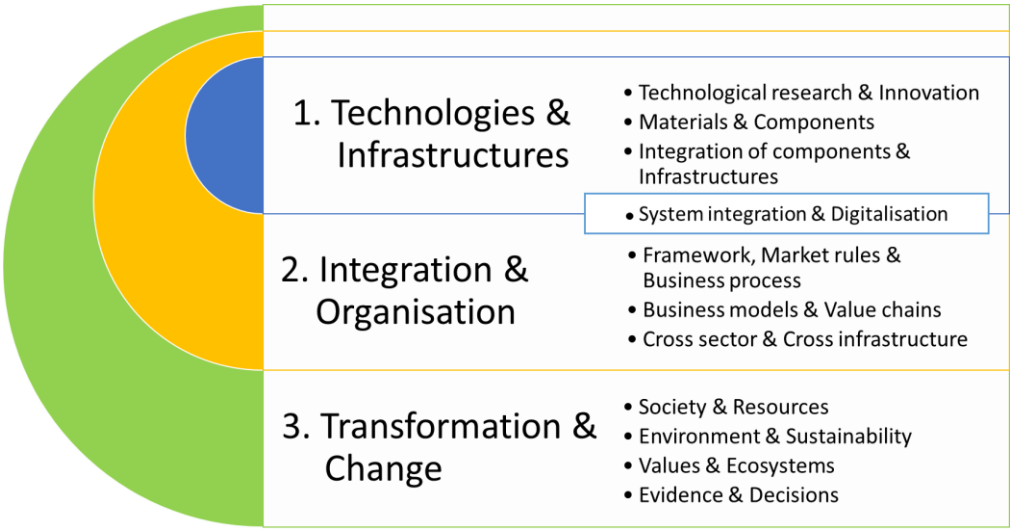

Figure: Three dimensions of transformative Innovation

1. This dimension implies **technologies and infrastructures**. Focussing on technological and infrastructure innovation for conversion (including end use), storage and logistics of clean energy and its carriers. The key question to address is: *How can necessary new technologies and infrastructures be designed, developed, and implemented into effective technical solutions for clean energy systems?*

2. This dimension implies **institutional and organisational structures.** The institutional innovation includes rules for market-based allocation of energy and regulations of grid operators, standards, grid-codes etc. Organisational Innovation focusses on how actors of the energy system and their interactions, ensure resilient and clean energy services based on technical-infrastructures, which are adapted to the conditions and functionalities (flexibility) required. The technological solutions within energy systems, are linked to the context of these institutional and organisational frameworks, The key question to address is: *How can interactions and value exchanges between different sectors and stakeholders be organised effectively to guarantee the operation of clean energy systems?*

3. This dimension implies system **transformation and change.** Focussing on the transition processes and their preconditions with respect to interrelations between technology, society and environment. Aspects such as strategic foresight and decision-making processes, upscaling and replication processes, design of the human–technology interface, involvement of stakeholders and citizens in the transition process to guarantee societal

readiness, facilitation of innovation ecosystems for clean products and services. The key question to address is: *How can the change processes for the new energy system be shaped to resonate with the needs and capacities of citizens, businesses, communities, and infrastructure providers?*

Please note that the methodologies and approaches to study the dimensions included in the project should be clearly defined. The work plan and deliverables should reflect all included dimensions and the potential interconnections between them. It is also important that the risk assessments for the projects fully consider all dimensions involved in the project, not only potential technological aspects.

The additional Joint Call 2026 partners will prefer projects that cover more than one of these three dimensions (ideally all three), and will be given priority over single layer projects. Projects should therefore clearly state goals for the institutional and transformation dimensions in relation to technological issues.

ANNEX B – NATIONAL/REGIONAL REQUIREMENTS

AUSTRIA

Funding agency name	**Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)**
Programme name and link	ERA Net EnerDigit Call 2026 https://www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/era-net-ses-joint-call-2026
Contact person	Elisa Marcoleoni, elisa.marcoleoni@ffg.at, +43 577 55-5065
Eligible applicants	- Companies, SMEs. - Research Organisation (e.g. universities and other research orgs.)
Eligible costs	All project related costs (e.g. Personnel, Equipment, Consumables, Training, Travels, etc.). Costs for organizing activities related to Knowledge-Community (location, catering, ...) will also be funded.
Type of research funded	Applied research (Industrial research to experimental development); pre-competitive, application-oriented R&D with high risk.
Require separate national or regional full application	Yes
National or regional funding available	€ 1.000.000
Further specifications	The minimum amount of funding requested nationally for the project is € 100.000 and the maximum is € 1.000.000. The ceiling of € 1.000.000 is fixed and must not be exceeded. Foreign partners whose funding agency does not participate in the Call may receive a maximum of 20% of the funding.

GERMANY

Programme name and link	8th Energy Research Programme https://go.fzj.de/EnerDigit
Contact person	Ralf Eickhoff, r.eickhoff@ptj.de, +49 2461 61-9419, +49 1515 8858107

	Nelli Hambach: n.hambach@ptj.de, +49 2461 61-2615
Eligible applicants	Private and public applicants are funded, e.g. (non-exclusive): • Private – SME • Private – large companies • Private – Non-profit research organisations • Higher education institutions (e.g. universities) • Public research organisations • Public organisations and municipalities
Eligible costs	Eligible in this call • Personnel costs including overheads (if applicable) • Travel expenses (default rate per journey: € 300 domestic, € 850 Europe) Other costs in exceptional and well-justified cases
Type of research funded	Focus on applied research (from TRL 4 up to TRL 8), the tasks of German partners must be related to the energy/electricity sector.
Require separate national or regional full application	SMEs must send a current BWA and the latest annual financial statements to the contact persons (call deadline applies) Successfully selected proposals must later submit national applications (Antrag)
National or regional funding available	€ 1.000.000
Further specifications	Applicants are invited to contact PtJ for advice in advance.

ANNEX C – EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation criteria	
Scores 0 – 5 (0 = Fail/Missing; 1 = Poor; 2 = Fair; 3 = Good; 4 = Very good; 5 = Excellent)	
(a) Excellence	
1. Relevance to the call • Proposed piloting, validation and demonstration clearly address the call aim • The project demonstrates clear alignment with European interoperability and digitalisation strategies pointed out in the call text • Proposed project is clearly based on a specific need, involving or clearly demonstrates engagement with relevant stakeholder	Score 0-5
2. Degree of innovation and innovative content • Project presents a novel or substantially improved approach for enabling interoperable energy data exchange across domains, based on open standards and existing reusable software components. • The expected innovation potential is clearly positioned (European/global relevance) and justified through technical feasibility. • The proposed IT framework and building blocks demonstrate scalability, modularity, and replicability for future reuse in EU-wide applications.	Score 0-5
3. State-of-the-art, link and contribution to past and ongoing, relevant international initiatives in digitalisation of energy systems and networks • Clear description of state-of-the-art within digital interoperability frameworks • Clear positioning of the project in relation to the state-of-the-art and **positioned in relation to existing initiatives** described in the call text. • Description of how the project builds on relevant international initiatives, knowledge and systematics and shows how it **reuses, complements, or extends** these efforts.	Score 0-5
4. Working methods and models • Excellence in collaboration: - Approaches and methods for collaboration are clearly defined, enabling relevant stakeholders to participate in co-creation of solutions.	Score 0-5

- Working methods ensure high-quality software engineering and validation, including interoperability testing, open-source development, and documentation practices. - IPRs and licensing (e.g. open-source strategy) described and handled appropriately (licenses, patents etc.). - Gender and diversity equality and perspectives are considered and implemented, both within the project group and in the development of solutions • Coverage of the three dimensions of innovation: - More than one dimension covered (cf. Annex A – dimensions of innovation) - Concrete methodological approach to the three dimensions (if only a single dimension is covered, the reasons for this must be clearly explained and justified). - Specific adoption/market challenges related to technology development are addressed	
(b) Impact	
1. Expected impacts • Expected impacts are **feasible and aligned with the call's objective** of establishing a foundation for an EU-wide interoperable IT framework for energy data exchange. • Short-term (proof of concept) and long-term (scalable European deployment, contribution to the Common European Energy Data Space) impacts contribute to the call's aim • Implementation contributes to the expected impacts; overall project (objectives, work plan, consortium) capable of achieving the impact	Score 0-5
2. Scaling-up, reproducibility, replicability and interoperability potential • The project demonstrates strong scalability, with the IT framework designed for expansion beyond the pilot context to an EU-wide or cross-sector application. • Reproducibility and replicability are ensured through open-source principles, modular architecture • Interoperability is a core design principle.	Score 0-5
3. Transnational value • Added value of the project being transnational (as opposed to being only national) • Results contribute directly to **European digitalisation goals** and the **Common European Energy Data Space (CEEDS)**. • The outcomes are **relevant beyond national contexts**, supporting EU-wide policy alignment • Use of available transnational resources; project partners from as many countries as possible	Score 0-5

4. Appropriateness of measures for dissemination and exploitation of results • Target audience identified, clearly stating why they are important for the project and how they will be involved • Suggested communication activities appropriate and related with identified stakeholders • Means of dissemination and exploitation of results that are **reusable and accessible.**	Score 0-5
(c) Quality and efficiency of the implementation	
1. Quality and relevant experience of project team • The consortium demonstrates **strong technical and domain expertise**, including experience in **software development, digital infrastructures, interoperability frameworks, and energy data systems.** • Project consortium has relevant complementary interdisciplinary competencies (complimentary expertise) • Beneficial team composition (national/regional and competence diversity – skills shall match the working areas identified in the project. Gender and diversity measures should also be considered in the team composition.)	Score 0-5
2. Appropriateness of the management structure and resource allocation • Management structure (roles) clearly defined and appropriate • Manageability of consortium: consortium size and composition are **well balanced**. • Resources that are allocated for implementation, documentation, testing, and open-source publication are clearly justified.	Score 0-5
3. Work plan, implementation, feasibility, and manageability • Detailed, clear, and logical work/implementation plan, following a logical sequence from requirements definition and architecture design to implementation, and validation. • Feasibility of deliverables and milestones with clearly defined KPIs, particularly regarding interoperability, scalability, and cross-sector integration. • Project delivers results efficiently in relation to the project budget • Project has considered climate impact minimizations in the implementation	Score 0-5
4. Risk identification, analysis, and preventive measures • Risks appropriately identified, including a mitigation strategy for loss of project partners (if applicable)	Score 0-5

• Risk analysis is clear, coherent, and logical. It should be applied to the work packages and the investigation approach used in the project • Preventive and remedial measures are proposed, and measures seem feasible and valid	
Total maximum score sum	**60**

ANNEX D – TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVELS

The following definitions apply to TRLs:

TRL 1 – basic principles observed.
TRL 2 – technology concept formulated.
TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept.
TRL 4 – technology validated in lab.
TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment.
TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment.
TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment.
TRL 8 – system complete and qualified.
TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment.

ANNEX E – KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY STANDARD WORK PACKAGE

The Knowledge Community provides a collaborative environment for sharing insights across current and past projects, national and international experts, and relevant stakeholder groups. It supports alignment, and cross-border learning, and ensures that project results contribute to a coherent European knowledge base on digital and smart energy systems.

Activities for the ERA Net Knowledge Community will be carried out within the CETPartnership Knowledge Community and include physical and virtual Working Group meetings and further Knowledge Community activities of CETPartnership. Participation enables formative, peer-to-peer evaluation of project progress, exchange with policymakers, programme owners, businesses, academia, and other partners.

While the participation of non-funded partners is not mandatory, it is encouraged in order to maximise dissemination and international reach. Applicants should design their own dissemination and exploitation strategies and consider potential synergies with the joint ERA-Net SES/CETPartnership Knowledge Community when planning their dissemination and exploitation activities

Knowledge Community Standard Work Package
Please insert the work package containing the tasks listed below into your overall work plan and allocate the necessary resources in the project budget (see the budgeting estimation below).
Note that this work package applies to the transnational level of the ERA Net SES specific national/regional requirements may apply regarding the reporting, communication and dissemination.

In general, the following applies to the activities in this Work Package.

- Participation of multiple Project Consortium Partners in an activity is possible.
- Active participation in at least one Working Group or related activity is encouraged.
- Regular participation in virtual meetings and workshops is encouraged.
- One physical participation per year is advisable, by traveling via train if feasible.
- Some national/regional Funding Organisations may only support public organisations in dissemination activities. Consult with relevant Funding Organisations if uncertain.

The Work Package includes **mandatory** and **optional** activities. In the mandatory activities, at least one project consortium partner needs to participate. Among the optional activities, a project consortium is advised to choose based on relevance, objectives, target topics, RDI approaches, etc. and capacity of the project.

Mandatory (with blue background) and optional (with white background) activities and estimated time commitments per person per year in contribution to the Knowledge Community co-creation activities:

Activity	Format	Number of events	Estimated time (PD/event)		
			Duration	Preparation & afterwork	Total
Onboarding meeting	Virtual	1	0.25	0.25	0.5
Annual CETPartnership Conference	Virtual	1	1.5	≈0.5	≈2
Call topic-specific Knowledge Community event[24]	Hybrid	1–2	≤2	Virtual: varies Physical: 1 for travel	Virtual: ≈2 Physical: ≈3
Impact Event	Hybrid	1–2	1	Virtual: ≈0.5 Physical: 1 for travel	Virtual: ≈1.5 Physical: ≈2
Working Group meeting	Hybrid	2–3	0.5	Virtual: ≈0.5 Physical: 1 for travel	Virtual: ≈1 Physical: ≈1.5t
Working Group contribution*	Hybrid	Ongoing	varies	varies	≤6

Budgeting of resources for the abovementioned tasks

The work package must have necessary resources (efforts measured in person-days as well as budgets). Appropriate resources depend on the Project Consortium composition, target topics, project duration, etc.

The minimum resources required are 15 person-days (PD) per year for a project, or 20 PD per year for a larger project with a total budget of more than EUR 2 million. The maximum resources expected are 3% of the total project efforts. To convert person-days (PD) to person-months (PM), an average of 18–20 PD per PM can be used.

The exact number of resources to be committed depends on the project length, size, consortium composition and specific project focus. The final organisation and execution of the abovementioned tasks will be the result of an iterative process between the Knowledge Community Management and each funded project as applicable. The estimated resources required for Knowledge Community activities are:

i. 30 – 45 days/ project.
ii. €5 000 – €10 000/ project for travel, accommodation and related expenses.

The advised minimum total resource allocation is €15 000 regardless of project duration.

[24] Knowledge Community activities will be assigned to an appropriate CETPartnership Transition Initiative (TRI)

ERA-Net SES EnerDigit additional Call 2026 funding partners

Austria

Germany

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