EU Commits Over €760 Million for Digital Transition and Cybersecurity

The European Union (EU) is set to invest over €760 million in digital transition and cybersecurity, as announced with the recent amendment of the Digital Europe work programmes for 2024 by the Commission.

The amended main work programme, with a 2024 budget of almost €549 million, will primarily focus on implementing projects utilizing digital technologies like data, cloud, and advanced digital skills. This programme aims to provide support for the seamless execution of Digital Decade multi-country projects, including opportunities for European Digital Infrastructure Consortia (EDICs). Additionally, it will introduce new initiatives to back the implementation of the AI Act and foster the development of a European AI ecosystem, with a specific emphasis on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

A substantial portion of the allocated budget, €214 million for 2024, has been designated for cybersecurity initiatives to strengthen the EU's collective resilience against cyber threats. The actions financed through this work programme will be overseen by the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre.

Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager expressed the significance of the Digital Europe Programme, highlighting its role in pooling EU and national funding for ambitious digital projects that no individual Member State could undertake alone. Vestager emphasized the crucial need for continued support in achieving digital decade targets, particularly in digital skills, excellence in artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.

Commissioner Thierry Breton stressed that the Digital Europe Programme is instrumental in driving Europe's leadership and sovereignty in digital technologies. He noted its alignment with the recent agreement on the EU AI Act and its potential to boost the growth of a thriving European AI start-up ecosystem. Additionally, the programme is expected to facilitate the collective advancement of capabilities in cloud technology, data management, and cybersecurity, along with the development of essential digital skills.

The implementation of the Digital Europe Programme will kick off with the first calls scheduled for early 2024, with additional calls anticipated in the spring. This initiative reflects the EU's commitment to advancing digital innovation and cybersecurity to maintain its competitive edge in the global digital landscape.

Source: European Commission

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