

Digital - Your 2026 funding roadmap

Do not miss out on these grants and incentives

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Digital – Relevant trends

- Sovereign cloud and digital resilience become strategic

- Dutch organizations are shifting from “cloud-first” to “control-first” strategies, combining public and sovereign clouds with local data centers to keep critical data secure and compliant with European standards

- National digital strategy focuses on collaboration and skills

- The Dutch government’s renewed digitalization strategy prioritizes collaboration across public sectors, responsible data sharing, and closing the digital skills gap to strengthen the economy and society

- EU launches €200 billion InvestAI initiative

- The European Commission will invest €200 billion in AI development, including €20 billion for four new AI “gigafactories” equipped with 100,000 advanced chips each. These facilities will be accessible to both large and small companies, aiming to boost Europe’s competitiveness, foster collaboration, and drive economic growth through responsible AI adoption

Funding roadmap 2026 - Opportunity selection



Relevant grants and incentives in 2026

Programs - Digital*	Description	SME only?	Estimated grant range	Funding rate	Deadline
Digital Europe	European program that funds projects to boost Europe's digital capacity in areas like AI, cybersecurity, supercomputing, advanced skills, and semiconductor development	No	€1m - €20m	50%-100%	3 March 2026
EIC Accelerator (incl. challenges)	European program providing funding and equity support for high-risk, high-impact innovations developed by start-ups and SMEs to scale breakthrough technologies	Yes	€2.5m + equity	Max. 70%	Multiple deadline dates
Horizon Europe	European program supporting innovative digital projects in the areas of advanced computing, AI, robotics, next-generation internet, Big Data, quantum technologies, and emerging enabling technologies	No	€1m - €20m	Max. 70%-100%	Call specific
CEF-Digital	European program supporting projects in secure, high-capacity connectivity infrastructures like Gigabit and 5G networks to strengthen Europe's digital backbone and enable cross-border services	No	~€5m	30%-70%	October 2026
CELTIC-NEXT (Eureka)	European program driving collaborative R&D in advanced ICT, accelerating 5G adoption and preparing for 6G to boost digital sovereignty and competitiveness	No	€1m - €10m	Max. 50%	24 April 2026
Xecs (Eureka)	European program funding collaborative R&D projects in electronic components and systems to drive sustainable digital transformation and strengthen industrial innovation	No	Max. €4m	Max. 50%	16 April 2026
ITEA (Eureka)	European program supporting collaborative R&D in software and systems innovation to drive digital transformation across domains like smart mobility, health, cities and industry	No	Max. €4m	Max. 50%	12 February 2026
Chips JU	European program boosting semiconductor research, innovation and manufacturing to strengthen Europe's technological leadership and digital capacity	Yes	€1m - €10m	Max. 30%	Call specific
IPCEI CIS	European initiative to develop the first interoperable, open cloud and edge computing ecosystem, enabling secure, energy-efficient, and federated data processing across the EU	No	~€25m	Max. 100%	TBA
IPCEI AST	European program aimed at advancing disruptive semiconductor technologies (e.g., AI chips, photonic circuits, advanced packaging) to strengthen Europe's strategic position and innovation capacity in the chip industry	No	Max. €50m	Max. 100%	TBA
WBSO	Dutch fiscal scheme offering tax benefits for companies conducting R&D activities in innovative technologies and processes	No	Project specific	Max. 50% of eligible costs	Year-round
EIA/MIA Vamil	Dutch fiscal advantage opportunities for investments in innovative decarbonizing techniques and environment friendly techniques	No	10%-12% net benefit	Max. 45% eligible costs	Year-round

Credential highlight: IPCEI

EY Grants & Incentives assisted a cloud services provider with a successful IPCEI application under the Cloud Infrastructure and Services theme.

Project details

A sovereign European cloud is focused on keeping data within Europe and attracting highly educated workers from the European Union to design and manage applications in virtual environments, which comply with European laws and regulations. However, at the time there were no fully European solutions available which offered: Scalability, energy efficiency, vertical integration, and efficient multi-tenancy at a (very) large scale.

- First EU-wide and interoperable multi-provider cloud-to-edge continuum
- Which concerns the development of technologies and infrastructure that go beyond what the market currently offers, and that enable significant improvements in terms of performance, safety, environmental impact, and cost efficiency

How EY provided support

- The EY and client teams worked collaboratively under time pressure to deliver a successful proposal
- Negotiations with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and the European Commission
- Continuous support in grant and project delivery
- Drafting progress reports for the Dutch government and European Commission



Outcome and benefit to client

The project was awarded a grant of ~€27m by the European Commission.

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