GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description	Author (Organisation)
V1.1	08.10.2020	First version of the document.	Jorge Lorente (ZABALA)
V1.2	16.10.2020	Second version, reviewing the content and proposing new sections	Daniel Alonso (ITI)
V1.3	04.11.2020	Third version integrating contributions of v1.2 and adding content in some subsections and creating new one according to the review of v1.2	Jorge Lorente (ZABALA)
V1.4	16.11.2020	Second review of ITI.	Daniel Alonso (ITI)
V1.5	17.11.2020	Fifth version of the document integrating contributions of ITI and improvements mainly in sections 2.4.	Jorge Lorente (ZABALA)
V1.6	26.11.2020	Final revision with minor typos and comments	Daniel Alonso (ITI)
V1.7	27.11.2020	Complete version with final decisions	Jorge Lorente (ZABALA)
V1.8	30.11.2020	Minor correction	Daniel Alonso (ITI)
V1.9	01.12.2020	Final version	Jorge Lorente (ZABALA)

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

INDEX

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides a full set of information regarding the first open call for proposals for the European Federation of Data Driven Innovation Hubs (EUHubs4Data – https://euhubs4data.eu/). In addition to these guidelines, the applicants are invited to get acquainted with the Sub-Grant Agreement template. The Sub-Grant Agreement template is available here.

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EUHubs4Data is an Innovation Action project co-funded by the European Union. The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme (call DT-ICT-05-2020 Big Data Innovation Hubs) under Grant Agreement No 951771.

EUHubs4Data was launched in September 2020, to create the European reference for Big Data experimentation and innovation, leveraging the achievements of relevant European initiatives on Big Data, linking all of them in a single ecosystem, composing a whole catalogue of data sources and datasets, services, and models, and providing a one-stop-shop that ensures that European companies at any level could easily access the economic opportunities offered by Big Data.

1.1.1 Main goal: European federation of Big Data Digital Innovation Hubs

A Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) is a support facility that helps companies to become more competitive by improving their business/production processes as well as products and services by means of digital technology. According to the DIHs Catalogue of the European Commission, there are around 240 DIHs in Europe (out of around 400) specialized in Data mining, Big Data, and database management. These initiatives bring together different stakeholders and services to foster data driven innovation at local and regional level, providing all needed elements to accompany industry on the journey towards data driven digitalization.

The main aim of the EUHubs4Data is to set a European federation of Big Data DIHs, which based on the premise "global catalogue, local offer", will ensure access to SMEs (including start-ups) in their respective regional ecosystems **to a global catalogue of data sources and federated data driven services**, making accessible the latest developments on Data Analytics and advanced assets on Big Data to companies all across Europe, and establishing as the reference on innovation and experimentation on Big Data.

1.1.2 Main outcome: catalogue of federated data driven services

The main outcome of EUHubs4Data will be a global catalogue of federated data driven services that will aggregate the individual offers, and that will be made accessible at regional and local levels by the corresponding DIHs. This catalogue will also include relevant European datasets coming from different data sources, with different level of information depending on the availability and accessibility of the data.
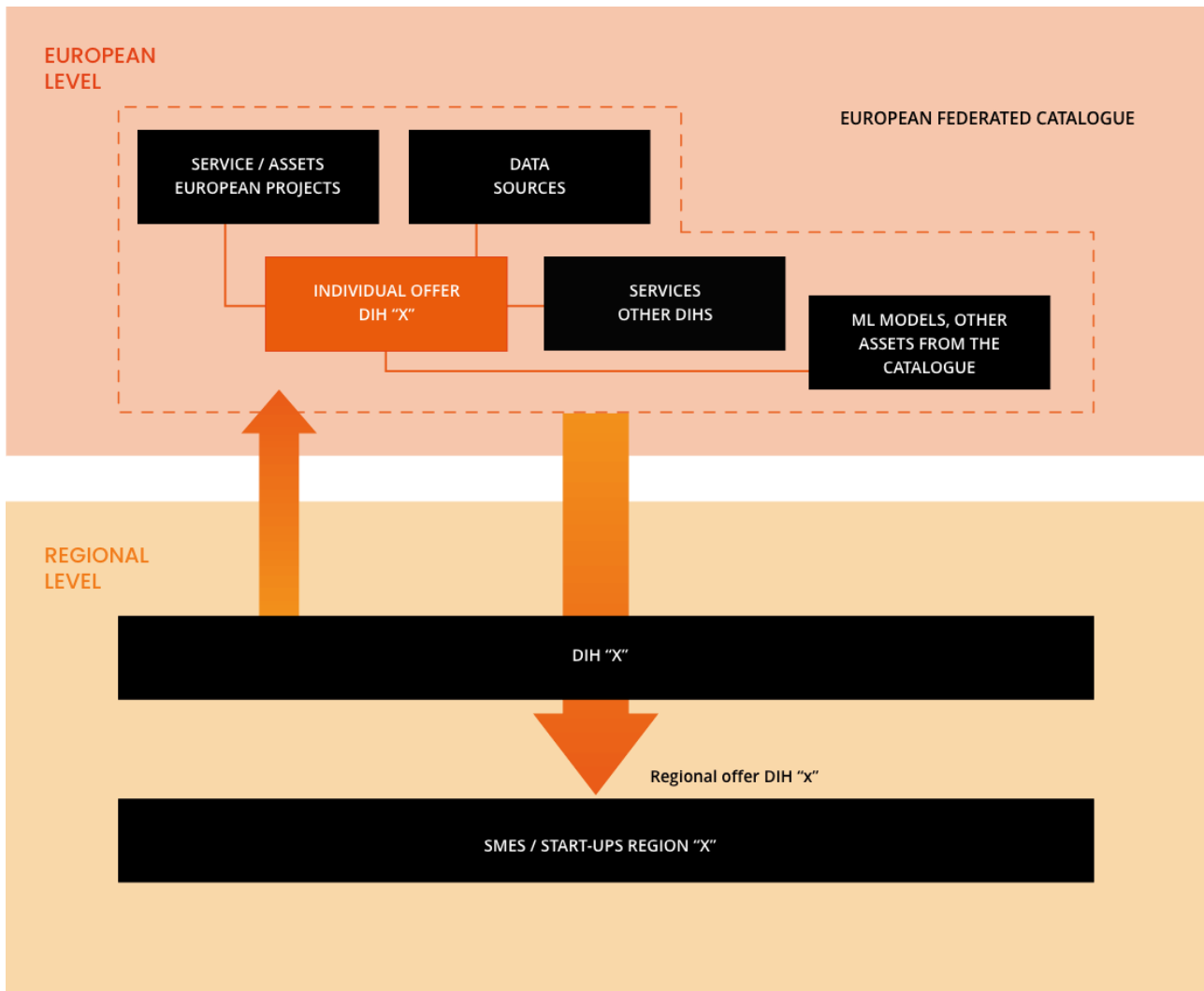
Figure 1. EUHubs4Data Concept for the European Federated Catalogue

1.2 EUHUBS4DATA METHODOLOGY AND CALL APPROACH

The overarching objective of EUHubs4Data is to create the reference federation in Europe for Big Data cross-border experimentation and innovation, providing a complete pan-European catalogue of data sources and services to foster data driven innovation at local and regional level.

To achieve this objective, EUHubs4Data is structured around four phases that work in an iterative way: (1) The setting up of the federation; (2) The definition and refinement of the catalogue of data driven services and federated data sources to be offered; (3) The Involvement of SMEs through open calls to define experiments and be end users of the federated catalogue; (4) The definition of models for growth and sustainability of the federation once the project is finished.

Within the third phase, EUHubs4Data aims to launch three open calls to
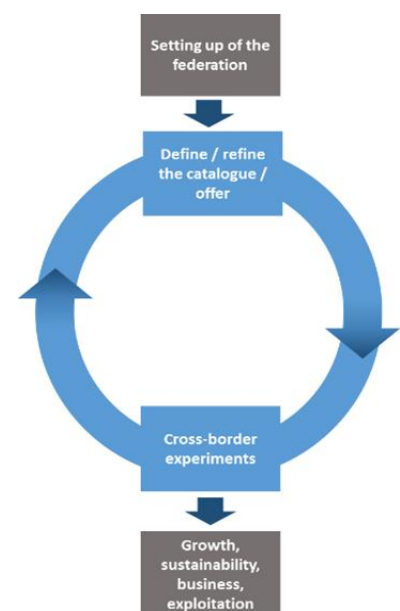
Figure 2. EUHubs4Data methodology based on 4 iterative phases.

attract European companies to use the services of the federation and propose a set of cross-border experiments. The experiments should have a three-fold objective:

1. testing the service delivery and provisioning model.

2. showing and creating awareness among the companies about the benefits of using the federated catalogue of services.

3. using the exploitation of the results from the experiments as a model to define a plan aimed at attracting end users beyond the cascade funding phase.

EUHubs4Data will support up to 42 experiments through a total of three open calls in the coming three years, distributing a total amount of €2.52M among the beneficiaries, for a total of €6.26M including support to the experiments from DIHs and other services that directly benefit the involved companies (see sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 for more information).

1.2.1 Call approach

Following the objectives of the project, providing a complete pan-European catalogue of data sets and services, EUHubs4Data has considered an open call approach for funding third parties interested in using the catalogue of data driven services and for promoting and validating the Big Data cross-border experimentation.

The open calls will be **published in F6S platform** [1]. The applicants of the open calls should **propose experiments that make use of the services included in the federated catalogue for the development of innovative products or advanced services**.

The **beneficiaries** of the open calls will be SMEs (including start-ups) from any member state or associated country, or groups of web entrepreneurs (see section 3.1 for more information). The maximum duration of the experiments will be 9 months, and the grant for each experiment and for each beneficiary will be €60,000, as is further explained in Section 1.2.2.

Figure 3 defines the call concept, where three open calls have been defined: (1) call 1 will open for submissions on December 2020; (2) call 2 will open on August 2021; (3) call 3 will open on May 2022. The budget for each open call has been defined considering that the offer (catalogue of federated data driven services) will increase as the project progresses.
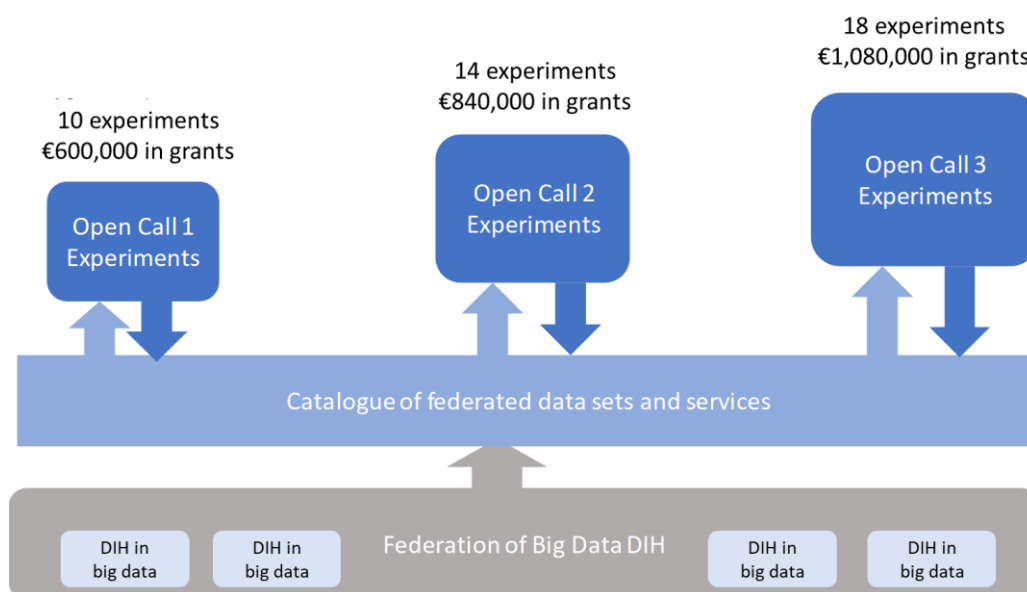
Figure 3. Open calls concept.

All selected experiments will sign a sub-grantee agreement between the coordinator of EUHubs4Data and the beneficiaries. Up to two proposals per applicant will be accepted for evaluation (the first two to be submitted through F6S platform). Others will be discarded. Only one proposal will be accepted for funding. Resubmission is allowed in the second call if the beneficiaries were not accepted in the first one.

1.2.2 DIH involvement on Open Calls. Data Service and data sets use.

Each experiment granted through the open calls will count with the participation of a beneficiary (1 SME or 1 Group of web entrepreneurs) and the DIHs (at least 2) providing the services from the federated catalogue. One of those DIHs will be the local/regional DIH part of the federation and that corresponds to region of the SME or Group of web entrepreneurs. If the applicant does not have a local/regional DIH partner in EUHubs4Data project, it will be assigned a DIH belonging to the federation.

For providing the federated services, the DIHs participating in each experiment will have a budget that will depend on the type of the experiment and the involved services. It has been considered a maximum budget for DIHs participating in the experiment of €70,000. Therefore, the total maximum budget for each experiment will be €130,000 (€70,000 for the DIHs participating in the experiments as data and service provider and coach, and €60,000 for the open call beneficiary).

Besides, DIHs will be involved also in the follow up and evaluation of the experiment, reviewing the accomplishment of the KPIs selected for the justification stage (see section 2.4.2).

2 CALL CONDITIONS AND GENERAL PROCEDURE

The following information regards to the call conditions and general procedure that apply to the three open calls to be opened during EUHubs4Data project implementation.

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1.1 Means of Submission

The **F6S platform** will be the entry point for all proposals (accessible at https://www.f6s.com/EUHubs4Data). Submissions received by any other channel will be automatically discarded.

Documents required in execution and justification phase will be submitted via dedicated channel, which will be indicated by EUHubs4Data consortium during the sub-granted experiments execution.

2.1.2 Language

English is the official language for EUHubs4Data open calls. Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the experiments. This means any requested submission of deliverables will be done in English in order to be eligible.

2.1.3 Documentation Formats

Any document requested in any of the phases (submission, evaluation, execution and justification) must be submitted electronically in **PDF format** without restrictions for printing.

2.1.4 Origin of the Funds

Selected beneficiaries will sign a dedicated Sub-Grant Agreement with the EUHubs4Data project coordinator. The funds attached to the Sub-Grant Agreement come directly from the funds of the European Project EUHubs4Data, and the EUHubs4Data coordinator is managing the funds according to the Grant Agreement Number 951771 signed with the European Commission.

As can be seen in the Sub-Grant Agreement template [2], this relation between the beneficiaries and the European Commission through EUHubs4Data project carries a set of obligations to the sub-grantees with the European Commission and the coordinator. It is the task of the beneficiaries to accomplish them, and of the EUHubs4Data consortium partners to inform about them.

Besides, the provision of services from the DIHs to the beneficiaries may also imply specific IPR obligations for the beneficiaries, as well as specific access conditions and additional requirements. In this way, the catalogue of services and datasets already include access conditions and requirements that should be considered by applicants when including them in the experiment description. However, all the specific IPR conditions and obligations regarding the provision of services and datasets by the DIHs will be determined by the nature of the experiment. Therefore, it will be described in detail in the Annex 6 of the subgrant agreement (see a template in [2]) that will be signed only by the beneficiary and the coordinator. However, if for any specific reason, a dedicated agreement between the DIHs and the beneficiary is needed, it will be prepared and included ad-hoc to the subgrant agreement.

2.1.5 Use of the financial contribution and recovery

Each beneficiary commits to a proper use of the funding received, for the purposes of carrying out the experiment in compliance with the KPIs and expected deliverables.

While no financial reporting will be requested within the experiment, teams must ensure that funds are

properly spent. See section 4.4. of the Sub-Grant Agreement for further details.

2.1.6 Number of Proposals per Applicant

Only one proposal can be accepted for funding per SME or team of individuals and per call. A beneficiary of a previous call will be eligible for future calls if the previous experiment succeeds on the evaluation of expected KPIs (see evaluation process on section 2.4.2.1). If a beneficiary with two selected experiments in two different calls fails to justify the expected results of the first funded experiment, the funding for the second experiment will be automatically cancelled.

Given the fact this call is a competitive one, and the teams will focus on specific data services from the federated catalogue to develop an experiment, **only up to two proposals per applicant will be accepted for evaluation**. In the case of a multiple submission by a SME or team, only the first two submitted through F6S platform (timestamp of the system) will enter our evaluation process, the rest being declared as non-eligible.

If the first two submitted proposals are declared non-eligible or fail to reach the thresholds of the evaluation, the other proposals submitted after these ones in a given call will not be considered for evaluation in any case. **Resubmission is allowed in the next call** if the proposals were not accepted in a previous call.

In the case of group of web entrepreneurs (individuals):

- The same individuals forming a team will be selected for funding only once, as in the case of an SME.

- Only the first two submitted proposals by the same individuals forming a team will be evaluated, as in the case of an SME.

- If an individual is taking part in several teams:

  – The members of the other teams will be informed about the participation of an individual in multiple teams.

  – The individuals participating in multiple teams will be requested to select only two proposals and will be removed from the others. This may affect the eligibility condition of a given proposal, if the number of individuals goes under 2.

2.1.7 Funding Principle

The beneficiaries of the selected experiments will receive Financial support and Technical support.

- **Financial support**: the grant for each experiment (and beneficiary) will be **60.000 Euros.**

  The payment of the financial support will be broken down into two evaluation periods:

  – <u>Intermediate review</u>: up to 30.000 Euros. *[M05 after stating the experiments].*

  – <u>Final evaluation</u> once the experiment is finished: final payment to balance the total payment to 60.000 Euros. *[M10 after starting the experiment].*

  Each experiment selected for funding will receive the funds at each evaluation period after properly justifying (with at least one deliverable) the accomplishment of the expected results, including a set of expected technical KPIs that will help to monitor the progress of the experiment. The beneficiary will prepare the technical justification, while the DIHs involved in the experiment will support and review it. A positive assessment of DIHs is needed for the payment in each period.

For more information about the definition of the technical KPIs monitoring the success of the experiment see section 2.4.2.2.

- **Technical support**: the DIHs from the consortium participating in the experiments will provide technical support for the beneficiaries in the use of the services and datasets from the federated catalogue. This support will be valued with a maximum of 70.000 Euros per experiment among the DIHs involved in the experiment.

Part of this support will be for one of the DIHs *who will act as coach* of the beneficiary (its local/regional DIH). However, in the case that the beneficiary belongs to a region not covered by a DIH of the EUHubs4Data federation, the beneficiary may be required to involve the participation of a regional DIH that supports him through the experiment execution and acts as coach and link with the DIH of the federation included in the experiment as data-service providers. In these cases, the cost of the regional DIH that is external to the federation should be covered by the beneficiary through their Financial support included in the EUHubs4Data grant.

2.2   BENEFICIARIES

2.2.1   Types of Beneficiaries

The accepted applicants for EUHubs4Data open calls are SME:

- **SMEs** according to the EC commission definition: Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 124, p. 36 of 20 May 2003 from any member state or associated country.

- **Groups of web entrepreneurs**: group of minimum 2 and maximum 4 web entrepreneurs can participate, but with a written commitment to have set up a legally registered SME if reaching "Experiment" phase. The company should be legally established in an eligible country according to section 2.2.3.

2.2.2   Definition of SME

A SME will be considered as such if accomplishing with the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC [3] and the SME user guide [4]. As a summary, the criteria which define a SME are:

- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.

- Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million or annual balance sheet total, less or equal to €43 million.

Note: start-ups qualify under the SME definition, and therefore, they are eligible for the EUHubs4Data Open Calls.

2.2.3   Eligible Countries

Only applicants legally established, and working, in the case of the individuals, in any of the following countries will be eligible:

- The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions.

- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States. Entities from OCTs are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

- H2020 Associated countries: according to the updated list published by the EC [5].

- The UK applicants are eligible under the conditions set by the EC for H2020 participation at the time of the deadline of the call.

2.3 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The submission will be done through the F6S platform [1], which is directly linked from EUHubs4Data website [6]. This means the proposers are required to **register a profile at FS6 to be able to submit a proposal**.

As stated in section 2.1.6, up to two proposals per applicant will be accepted for evaluation (the first two submitted through the F6S platform). However, if the applicant discovers an error in an eligible submitted proposal, and provided the call deadline has not passed, the applicant may submit a new version. For this purpose, the applicant must request it to F6S team through opencall@euhubs4data.eu, who will open again the application form. Once opened, the applicants will be able to modify all questions of the application form. Please be aware that once opened, the applicants should send again the form, or it will not be evaluated. Once resubmitted, only the last version received before the call deadline will be considered in the evaluation.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including communications delays, automatically leads to rejection of the submission. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

EUHubs4Data offers a dedicated support channel available for proposers at opencall@euhubs4data.eu. Requests or inquiries about the submission system or the call itself, received AFTER the closure time of the call will neither be considered nor answered.

2.3.1 Documents to be submitted:

The documents that will be submitted will be: (1) Proposal Form, and (2) Declaration of Honour.

1. Proposal form. An online form divided in different sections: (i) Excellence, (ii) Impact, and (iii) Implementation.

   The experiment proposals have to strictly adhere to the forms provided by EUHubs4Data consortium via F6S platform [7], which defines sections and the overall length. Participants are requested to carefully read and follow the instructions in the form. Evaluators will be instructed not to consider extra material in the evaluation.

2. Declaration of Honour. A tick box clicked by the SME or the individuals confirming they have read the conditions and agree with the conditions defined in this document [8].

2.4 EVALUATION PROCESS

2.4.1 Proposal Stage

2.4.1.1 Proposal Reception

Submissions will be done ONLY through F6S platform [1] in the space enabled for EUHubs4Data project [6]. A full list of applicants will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with EC for transparency).

The application reception will close at 12:00 (noon) CET on 8th February 2021. There will not be deadline extensions unless a major problem, caused by EUHubs4Data and not by the applicants, makes the system unavailable.

2.4.1.2 Eligibility

An automatic filtering to discard non-eligible proposals will follow the shortlist below. Eligibility criteria check will verify:

a. The existence of a legal SME in an eligible country, or, in the case of a group of individuals, their legal residence in an eligible country.

b. The uniqueness of the proposal and its expected results. Experiments are expected to be close-to-market, so all experiments should envisage at least a Key Exploitable Result to be eligible.

c. The use in the experiment of, at least, two data services from the EUHubs4Data federated catalogue, provided, at least, by two different DIHs. If the experiment does not include the use of federated services in the proposed way, it will not be eligible.

d. The correct fulfilment of the submission form on F6S, including all required documents.

e. The issues of multiple participation described in section 2.1.6.

f. The existence of a financed experiment in a previous open call of EUHubs4Data that did not succeed in the execution (according to the expected technical KPIs).

Proposals marked as non-eligible will get a rejection letter including the reasons (a to f) for being declared as non-eligible. No further feedback on the process will be given.

2.4.1.3 Remote Evaluation

For the selection of the beneficiaries an evaluation process will consider the following requirements:

- **Evaluation Criteria.** Three main criteria will be considered for the selection of the best beneficiaries in each call: 1. Excellence, 2. Impact, and 2. Implementation. The three criteria will have the same weighting in the evaluation. Each of the three criteria will include, among others, the next concepts into account:

  1. Excellence:
     - Technical scope and maturity of the experiment (closeness to market).
     - Contribution to the challenges of the European Data Spaces (see section 3.1.1 for more detail).
     - Appropriate use of services from the federated catalogue.
     - Innovation of the experiment referred to the expected results (product/service) and maturity of the proposed innovation (closeness to market).
     - Datasets used from the federated catalogue.
     - New datasets resulting from the experiment.
     - Excellence of the experiment: overall impression of the technical criteria.

  2. Impact:
     - Valuable Key Exploitable Results that will improve the performance (technical, business, etc.) of beneficiaries by carrying out the experiment and/or will increase the revenues of the organization as result from the experiment.

- Customers or paying-users already exist. Outstanding Unique Selling Points and alignment of new solutions or services with user needs.

- Fitness to market and appropriate analysis of competitors.

- Partners and stakeholders for expansion: existence of investors already interested, business angels or other public funding sources.

- Credibility of future plans and expected business after the experiment (growth).

- Impact of the experiment: clear, achievable, ambitious and measurable contributions to the expected impacts (see 3.1.2).

- Overall impression of the impact.

3. Implementation**:**

- Team capabilities: data skills in the team, resources, complementary profiles, entrepreneurship spirit, market-domain contacts related with the experiment, relevance of the board of advisors (if any).

- Quality of implementation: (a) clear and achievable working plan; (b) results easy to be monitored through specific KPIs; (b) clarity and applicability of deliverables.

- Viability of the implementation: has the company/main profiles the necessary experience/expertise? has the company carried out previous projects related to the proposed experiment? Having developed related projects will enable the project team to take advantage of good practices and lessons learnt.

- Overall impression of the implementation.

- **Evaluators.** Evaluation will be carried out by external experts (big data and business experts) to the consortium. Every proposal will be assessed by at least 3 different evaluators that will have to sign a declaration that they have no conflict of interest.

- **Scoring.** Reviewers will evaluate the proposals considering the 3 main criteria. Each criterion (excellence, impact and implementation) will have a score from 0 to 5. Decimal scores may be given. For each criterion under examination, score values will indicate the following assessments:

  - 0 Fail. The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information

  - 1 Very poor. The criterion is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner.

  - 2 Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses.

  - 3 Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.

  - 4 Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.

  - 5 Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

2.4.1.4   Selection criteria.

For the selection of the beneficiaries, EUHubs4Data will verify that:

- **Minimum score to be eligible.** A minimum score of 3 for each criterion and an overall score of 12 will be needed as a minimum threshold. Only proposals reaching both criteria will be eligible for accessing the grant.

  In the case that eligible proposals accessing the grant exceed the available funds for each call, the proposals with higher rank will be selected for funding until the funds are completed. The rest will be ordered (by evaluation score) in a reserve list.

- **Maximum number of experiments supported by each DIH.** To guarantee proportionate geographical coverage of DIHs within the three open calls, a maximum number of experiments supported by each DIH has been pre-defined for the first call (see section 3.2).

  If a selected experiment (according to the experts' evaluation) requires the support of a DIH that has exceeded its maximum number of experiments supported for this call, the experiment will enter a process of negotiation with representatives of the EUHubs4Data federation. If the service provided by the DIH that has exceeded their maximum support can be replaced by an equivalent service provided by another DIH of the EUHubs4Data federation that has not exceeded their maximum support in this call, the replacement of the DIH service will be proposed to the beneficiary to keep the eligibility criteria. If an agreement is achieved, the experiment will be proposed for funding. If not, it will be declared as non-eligible and will be replaced by the experiment with higher rank from the reserve list that accomplish with the selection criteria.

2.4.1.5   Draw Resolution

In the case of a draw in the final scoring, the following criteria will be used in the following order of priority:

- Higher score for impact criterion.
- Higher score for implementation criterion.
- Date of submission: earlier submitted proposals go first.

2.4.1.6   Communication

Every applicant will receive via e-mail:

- An Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) containing the information on the evaluation. ESR will be sent to applicants after being approved by EUHubs4Data consortium and the evaluators.

- An evaluation letter informing of rejection decision, invitation to negotiation and following steps or being part of the reserve list.

2.4.1.7   Ethics assessment

The Ethics Monitoring Group of the EUHubs4Data project will make an Ethics Assessment of the project description of the selected beneficiaries. If an ethics issue (e.g. data management) is raised, the Ethics Monitoring group will ask the beneficiaries to accomplish with the required actions.

2.4.1.8   Appeal procedure

If the applicant considers that there has been a shortcoming in the way the proposal has been evaluated that may affect the final decision on whether to fund it or not; or if the applicant believes the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect and have failed to comply with the rules of the Open Call; and that her/his interests have been prejudiced as a result, the following appeal procedure is available.

If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The consortium will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.

- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.

- Only one appeal request per proposal will be considered by the consortium. The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.

A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to: opencall@euhubs4data.eu. Any complaint made should include: (i) contact details, (ii) the subject of the complaint, and (iii) information and evidence regarding the alleged breach. Anonymous complaints or those not providing the mentioned information will not be considered.

Complaints should be made within five (calendar) days since the evaluation results are sent to applicants.

As a general rule, the EUHubs4Data Team will investigate the complaints with a view to arriving at a decision to issue a formal notice or to close the case within no more than twenty days from the date of reception of the complaint, provided that all required information has been submitted by the complainant. Where this time limit is exceeded, the EUHubs4Data Team will inform the complainant by email.

If a definitive response cannot be given at that stage, this reply will indicate when a definitive response will be provided. The EUHubs4Data consortium does not undertake to engage in any further discussion about the evaluation of your proposal beyond the definitive response.

Finally, the consortium counts on your cooperation not to send in speculative requests for re-evaluation. Unless there is clear evidence of a shortcoming, there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation.

2.4.1.9   Preparation and Signature of the Agreement

The following actions must be carried out in order to enter into the Sub-Grant Agreement:

- **Status information of the beneficiaries**:

  a. **SMEs**. If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary Register of the H2020 Participant Portal, the PIC number has to be provided. The following documents will be required to prove the status as an SME if the applicant has not been fully validated as an SME on the Participant Portal:

    – SMEs check list: signed and stamped. Template available at [9]. In the event they declare being non-autonomous: the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organizations. If you are an SME already validated (only registered is not enough) by the participant Portal of the European Commission (the Open Call management team will check it), this document will not be required.

    – Status Information Form. It includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company.

    – Legal existence. Company Register, Official Journal and so forth, showing the name of the organization, the legal address and registration number and, if applicable, a

copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).

- Supporting documents. In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.

b. **Group of individuals**: When there is not a constituted SME, the applicants could be a group between 2 to 4 individuals. It will be required:

- A copy of the ID-card or passport of every participant in the experiment team.
- A proof for every participant in the project that (s)he is legally established and working in an eligible country (see section 2.2.3).
- A written commitment to set up a legal SME if reaching the funds (see Annex 3 of the sub-grant agreement template [2]).

- **Bank account information**: A form (see Annex 5 of the sub-grant agreement template [2]) signed by the SME, individuals, and the bank owners will be needed to indicate the account where the funds will be transferred. The holder of the account will be the SME or all the individuals (or the coordinator of the group on its own if allowed by the other team members).

- **Sub-Grant Agreement**: Signed between the coordinator of EUHubs4Data (representing the whole consortium) and the beneficiary/ies.

The request, by EUHubs4Data consortium, of the documentation will be made including deadlines. Failing to meet the deadlines requested will directly end up the negotiation process and experiments under the reserve list will substitute the failing applicants.
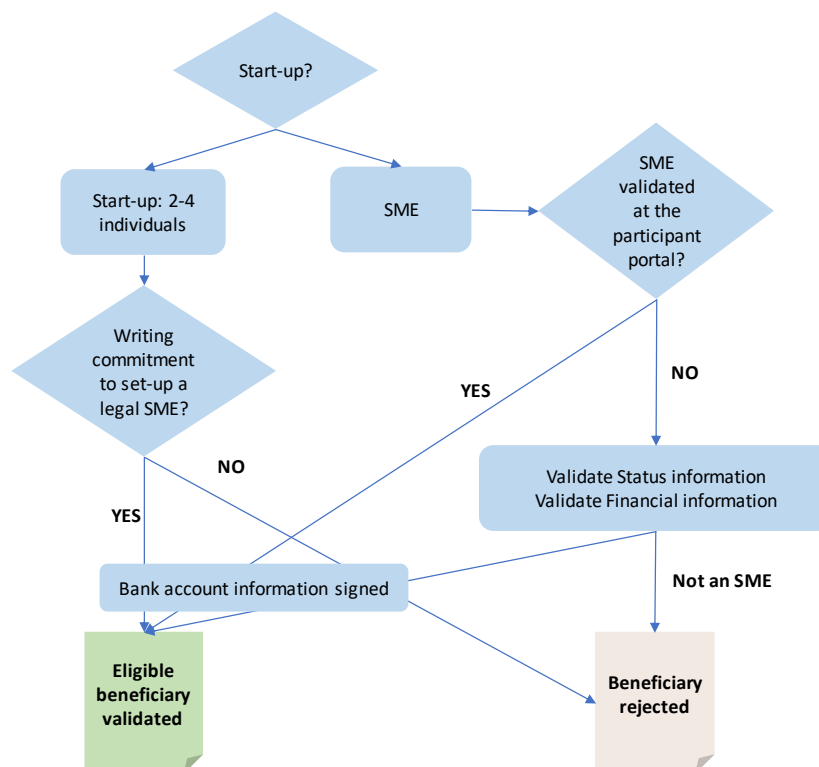

Figure 4. Beneficiaries validation process.

2.4.2 Justification Stage

2.4.2.1 Evaluation

The funding is not under a traditional administrative and economic justification system, but results-driven. This means that funding will depend on the accomplishment of specific metrics of success (KPIs) rather than justifying invoices, hourly dedication or high administrative/writing workload, which are not so effective.

The results-driven evaluation will be leaded by the DIHs providing the federated services for the experiment execution. A positive assessment of the expected results by the DIHs will be required for the payment. In this sense, each experiment selected for funding will be evaluated according to the involvement of the beneficiary within the EUHubs4Data ecosystem for experimentation and the evidences of the achievement of the expected results (the technical KPIs signed in the grant agreement for monitoring the progress of the experiment). The evidences of the achievement of the expected KPIs should be presented through, at least, a deliverable at each justification period.

2.4.2.2 Definition of Technical KPIs for the evaluation and Deliverable(s) for justification.

The payment of the grant will require a positive assessment of the DIHs supervising the accomplishment of the technical KPIs. Therefore, at least one deliverable justifying the achievement of the selected KPIs is needed at each justification and payment period (see section 2.4.2.3).

- **Technical KPIs**: applicants are required to propose (through the application form) the technical KPIs that they think will be appropriate to evaluate the success of the experiment. Within the application form, they will be able to propose a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 KPIS and their expected values for each justification period.

  If the experiment is granted, the applicant's proposal of KPIs will be revised by the DIHs involved in the experiment before the signature of the grant agreement. After revising the experiment description and the proposal of KPIs, the DIHs will have the power to define changes on the KPIs or their expected values. Potential modifications of KPIs and expected values will be notified to the beneficiary and reflected on the subgrant agreement.

- **Deliverable(s)**: applicants are required to send, at least, one deliverable per justification period to justify the achievement of the values expected for each KPI. Justification periods are at Month 5 and Month 10 after the start of the experiment (see section 2.4.2.3). Deliverable(s) should be submitted by email to opencall@euhubs4data.eu.

  The deliverables will be the only official document to justify the accomplishment of the Technical KPIs that will be reviewed by DIHs before the leverage of the funding (see figure summarising the process in section 2.4.3). Therefore, it is highly recommended that they show, as far as possible, all the possible evidence of the activity carried out to achieve any kind of expected result. The justification of results may include (but it is not limited to) schemes of design/architectures, images of achieved results, link to repositories of open-source codes and/or links to mock-ups, prototypes or demos.

  Be aware that the insufficient justification of expected KPIs through the Deliverable(s) may block the payment of the funds at each justification period.

2.4.2.3 Payments

The payment of the grant will be segmented in two parts: (1) intermediate payment, and (2) final payment. Both payments will be released after a revision of the deliverables justifying the expected KPIs.

- **Intermediate payment.** At month 5 of the experiment, an intermediate review will be carried out by the DIHs partners of EUHubs4Data consortium involved in the experiments.

  In the case of a positive assessment, 30.000 Euros will be transferred to the beneficiary. If DIHs consider that the experiment has not reached the expected results (according to the defined KPIs), the intermediate payment may be retained, but the experiment will not be cancelled.

  In the case of a negative assessment during the intermediate justification period, a proportionate quantity of the intermediate payment can be retained and released after a positive assessment at the final justification period (month 10).

- **Final payment**. At the end of the experiment (month 10), DIHs will perform the final assessment, and after a positive assessment of DIHs, a final payment will be executed to balance the total grant transferred to the beneficiary to 60.000 Euros.

2.4.3 Summary of the evaluation and payment process
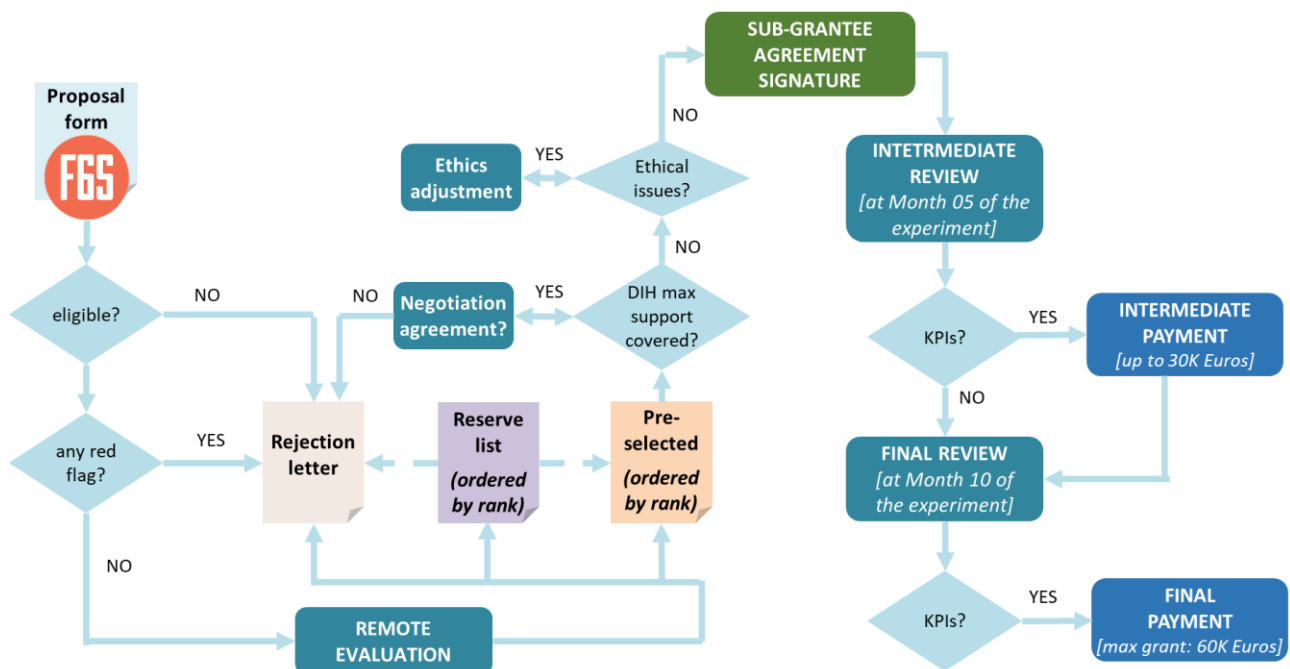
Figure 5. Summary of the evaluation and payment process

2.5 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The following background and foreground statements are a reference applicable to all experiments granted through the open calls of the EUHubs4Data Project. However, specific particularities may apply to individual experiments due to the nature of the experiment and/or the proposed use of the EUHubs4Data catalogue offer. In these cases, all the specific IPR conditions and obligations will be described in detail in the Annex 6 of the subgrant agreement (see a template in [2]) that will be signed only by the beneficiary and the coordinator. However, if for any specific reason, a dedicated agreement between the DIHs and the beneficiary is needed, it will be prepared and included ad-hoc to the subgrant agreement.

2.5.1 Background

- All the participants will confirm and declare that they are the sole creators of the software or products they will develop and that it is free from third party rights. Combinations of their own software plus open source existing ones will be permitted and fostered (i.e. making available a full-stack of Big Data tools ready to use).

- The SMEs may be using data with certain restrictive licenses (data owned by the DIHs acting as Data Service Providers) combined with Open Data, other sources of data or whatever combination that might be needed. It will be the obligation of the SMEs to clearly state the kind of agreement that applies to these data. Data included from the providers in the consortium will be identified in the sub-grantee agreement and use access will be granted for SMEs.

- The ownership of the data provided by the DIHs will be always from the partner providing the data. Unless otherwise agreed, the transfer of property or extension of the use of the data, needs to be agreed between the data provider and the party(ies) interested in such exploitation through a bilateral agreement.

- By default, the right to make use of the data provided by DIHs, as well as the use of other services from the DIHs included in the experiment, finalises for the SME once their participation in the experiment is finished.

- In the case of use of personal data, the management and processing of this data will be done according to the guidelines included in the Data Management Plan of the EUHubs4Data (deliverable D10.3 and successive versions) and under supervision of the Ethics Monitoring Group of EUHubs4Data. Besides, beneficiaries will have to ensure that this handling of personal data will be done according to European (General Data Protection Regulation) and specific national legislations.

2.5.2 Foreground

The property of the software or products developed by sub-granted SMEs, within the framework of the EUHubs4Data open calls, will be entirely owned by them. It will be their decision to determine if any part of the software will have an open-source license or not. The beneficiaries agree on not to commercialize those results during the duration of the experiment.

If the experiment results in the generation of data, the ownership of the generated data will be always from the Party generating the data, unless the Beneficiary and the DIHs agree any particular specification in the corresponding Annex of the sub-grant agreement

Moreover, given the fact that the developments by the beneficiaries may make use of third party data (DIHs acting as Data Service Providers) and data driven services, the core consortium will create the communication framework to **facilitate agreements between beneficiaries and DIHs** to find a common workaround for the continuity of the sub-granted actions beyond the programme. However, it will be a decision of the DIHs and the beneficiaries to come to a collaboration agreement out of the EUHubs4Data scope.

3   FIRST CALL

3.1   CALL DESCRIPTION

The objective of the experiments is to **make use of the services included in the federated catalogue, proposing combinations of them for the development of innovative products or advanced services**. To achieve the main aim, it is expected that experiments should:

- Involve, at least, two services included in the federated catalogue (see section 3.3.1), provided by, at least, two different DIHs. It is expected that the experiment propose the use of a combination of services (coming from different DIHs) that complement each other, in order to benefit from a more advanced service not available in the individual offer of the DIHs.

- Apply the combination of services from the federated catalogue to solve specific problems, overcome barriers or achieve challenges that cannot be attained (or at least in a much more difficult way) without the use of those services. See the following subsection ("scope and challenge") for more information.

- Achieve Key Exploitable Results (KER) that could be delivered to market in the form of innovative data driven product or service.

3.1.1   Scope and challenge

In Febrery 2020, within the framework of the European Data Strategy [10], the European Commission committed to promote the development of common European data spaces in strategic economic sectors and domains of public interest. These sectors or domains are those where the use of data will have systemic impact on the entire ecosystem, but also on citizens.

The Data Spaces and its associated challenges are:

1. **A Common European industrial (manufacturing) data space,** to support the competitiveness and performance of the EU's industry, allowing to capture the potential value of use of non-personal data in manufacturing.

2. **A Common European Green Deal data space,** to use the major potential of data in support of the Green Deal priority actions on climate change, circular economy, zero-pollution, biodiversity, deforestation and compliance assurance. The "GreenData4All" and 'Destination Earth' (digital twin of the Earth) initiatives will cover concrete actions.

3. **A Common European mobility data space,** to position Europe at the forefront of the development of an intelligent transport system, including connected cars as well as other modes of transport. Such data space will facilitate access, pooling and sharing of data from existing and future transport and mobility databases.

4. **A Common European health data space,** which is essential for advances in preventing, detecting and curing diseases as well as for informed, evidence-based decisions to improve the accessibility, effectiveness and sustainability of the healthcare systems.

5. **A Common European financial data space,** to stimulate, through enhanced data sharing, innovation, market transparency, sustainable finance, as well as access to finance for European businesses and a more integrated market.

6. **A Common European energy data space,** to promote a stronger availability and cross-sector sharing of data, in a customer-centric, secure and trustworthy manner, as this would facilitate innovative solutions and support the decarbonisation of the energy system.

7. **A Common European agriculture data space,** to enhance the sustainability performance and competitiveness of the agricultural sector through the processing and analysis of production and other data, allowing for precise and tailored application of production approaches at farm level.

8. **Common European data spaces for public administration,** to improve transparency and accountability of public spending and spending quality, fighting corruption, both at EU and national level, and to address law enforcement needs and support the effective application of EU law and enable innovative 'gov tech', 'reg tech' and 'legal tech' applications supporting practitioners as well as other services of public interest

9. **A Common European skills data space**, to reduce the skills mismatches between the education and training system on the one hand and the labour market needs on the other.

Applicants are encouraged to take those Data Spaces and corresponding challenges as a reference to describe their experiments, focusing on one or several of either proposed sectors or any other domain relevant to the European economy, and contributing to their specific challenges.

3.1.2 Expected impacts

Experiments are expected to achieve, at least, two of the following impacts:

1. **Generate new datasets** that can contribute to improve the impact of the EUHubs4Data catalogue.

2. **Develop data-driven innovations** that result in new close-to-market products or services.

3. Contribute to the **creation of employment** and new job profiles related to the Data sector.

3.2 DIGITAL INOVATION HUBS

The following table summarises the DIHs providing data services (see section 3.3) that can be selected to participate in the experiments and the maximum number of experiments they can support during the first call. Please remember that the maximum number of experiments supported by each DIH is a selection criterion (see section 2.4.1.4).

N.	DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB	PROJECT PARTNER (SHORT NAME)	COUNTRY	Nº OF EXPERIMENTS SUPPORTED IN THE 1ST CALL (MAXIMUM)
1	The Data Cycle Hub	Instituto Tecnológico De Informática (ITI)	Spain	3
2	EGI Federation	Stichting Egi (EGI)	Netherlands	2
3	Cineca Consorzio Interuniversitario	Cineca Consorzio Interuniversitario (CINECA)	Italy	3
4	Teralab	IMT Transfert (IMT)	France	3
5	Barcelona Big Data CoE	Fundacio EURECAT (EURECAT)	Spain	3
6	Know-Center	Know-Center Gmbh Research Center For Data-Driven Business & Big Data Analytics (KNOW)	Austria	3

N.	DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB	PROJECT PARTNER (SHORT NAME)	COUNTRY	Nº OF EXPERIMENTS SUPPORTED IN THE 1ST CALL (MAXIMUM)
7	ICE by RISE	Rise Research Institutes of Sweden Ab (RISE)	Sweden	3
8	CeADAR - Ireland's Centre for Applied AI	University College Dublin, National University of Ireland (NUID UCD)	Ireland	2
9	Aragon DIH	Instituto Tecnologico De Aragon (ITAINNOVA)	Spain	3
10	KIT – Smart Data Innovation Lab	Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT)	Germany	2
11	HPC4Poland	Instytut Chemii Bioorganicznej Polskiej Akademii Nauk (PSNC)	Poland	1
12	4PDIH	Univerza V Ljubljani (UL)	Slovenia	1

Table 1. List of DIHs providing data services and maximum number of supported experiments.

3.3 OFFERING

Under the paradigm **"European catalogue, regional offer",** the federation has a two-fold objective: on the one hand, the creation of a federated catalogue that combines data driven services and data sources coming from the individual offers of the DIHs, enriched with solutions and assets coming from past and existing European projects, and other marketplaces and catalogues in Europe. On the other, to make it accessible by DIHs at regional and local level to small and medium size actors, so they can benefit from the latest European advances on Big Data and AI.

3.3.1 Federated catalogue

The EUHubs4Data consortium have published a federated catalogue provided by the different DIHs of the EUHubs4Data federation. The federated catalogue is divided in two different catalogues:

1. **EUHUbs4Data federated catalogue of data-driven services**. It is available at the EUHubs4Data webpage [11].

2. **EUHUbs4Data federated catalogue of open datasets**. It is available at the EUHubs4Data webpage [12]. Please be aware that private datasets are considered within the catalogue of data-driven services.

NOTE 1: remember that to be eligible (see section 2.4.1.2), applicants should propose an experiment that involve, at least two services provided by, at least, two different DIHs. It is not mandatory to use open datasets from the federated catalogue. However, it is expected is that the experiment propose the use of a combination of services (coming from different DIHs) that complement each other, in order to benefit from a more advanced service not available in the individual offer of the DIHs. Therefore, experiments that use a larger combination of resources from the federated catalogue are welcome.

NOTE 2: be aware that, due to the description of the experiment, some incompatibilities from a technical point of view may arise regarding the combination of services. In this case, during the negotiation of the

sub-grant agreement, the required adaptations/modifications (e.g. replacement of equivalent services) will be proposed by EUHubs4Data to the beneficiary to keep the eligibility criteria.

3.3.2 Support from DIHs

Each experiment will be supported by the DIHs whose services are included in the experiment.

The main goal is to provide guidance and support on the application and use of the selected services. The specific level and scope of this support will depend on the nature and type of the involved services.

One of these DIH will act as coach DIH, who will be the main contact point for the beneficiaries with respect to the other DIHs involved in the experiment. The coach DIH will be responsible of monitoring their metrics, to follow them up regularly.

3.4 CALENDAR

The calendar for the first call (proposal and execution stages) is depicted in the following figure:

	dic-20	ene-21	feb-21	mar-21	abr-21	may-21	jun-21	jul-21	ago-21	sep-21	oct-21	nov-21	dic-21	ene-22	feb-22
Publication of the open call	█														
Submission period	█	█	█												
Evaluation and selection			█	█	█										
Signature of agreements with beneficiaris					█										
Execution of experiments						█	█	█	█						
1st check - Follow up										█					
Execution of experiments										█	█	█	█	█	
Final check - Final follow up															█

3.4.1 Proposals

- Call opening on F6S platform [1] on 09/12/2020
- Deadline for submission via FS6 Platform 08/02/2021, 12:00 (noon) CET
- Evaluation from 09/02/2021 to 02/04/2021
- Communication of results to applicants from 05/04/2021 to 09/04/2021
- Preparation and Signature of Sub-Grant Agreements (by sub-grantees, ITI, and involved DIHs if needed) from 12/04/2021 to 30/04/2021

3.4.2 Execution and justification

- Execution from 01/05/2021 to 31/01/2022
- Intermediate evaluation (09/2021) and final evaluation (02/2022) carried out by the DIHs involved in each experiment to monitor the accomplishment of the defined technical KPIs.

Dates are an initial estimation and might slightly change if agreed by EUHubs4Data consortium for the benefit of the sub-grantees.

4 REFERENCES

[1] "F6S Platform for EUHubs4Data," [Online]. Available: https://www.f6s.com/EUHubs4Data.

[2] "Sub-Grant Agreement template," [Online]. Available: https://euhubs4data.eu/opencalls-docs-1/EUH4D_subgranteetemplate.pdf.

[3] "Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC," [Online]. Available: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF.

[4] "The new SME definition," [Online]. Available: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/revised-user-guide-sme-definition-0_en.

[5] "H2020 associated countries," [Online]. Available: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf.

[6] "EUHubs4Data website," [Online]. Available: https://euhubs4data.eu/.

[7] "F6S Platform for EUHubs4Data First Open Call," [Online]. Available: https://www.f6s.com/euhubs4data-opencall1.

[8] "Declaration of Honour," [Online]. Available: www.euhubs4data.eu/opencalls-docs-1/EUH4D_doh.pdf.

[9] "EUHubs4Data SME Check List," [Online]. Available: https://euhubs4data.eu/opencalls-docs-1/EUH4D_checksme.pdf.

[10] "A European strategy for data, COM(2020) 66," [Online]. Available: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0066&from=EN .

[11] "EUHubs4Data federated catalogue of data-driven services," [Online]. Available: https://euhubs4data.eu/services.

[12] "EUHubs4Data federated catalogue of datasets," [Online]. Available: https://euhubs4data.eu/datasets/.