

HORIZON-CL4-2025-03-HUMAN-16: Drive the evolution of the internet towards open and interoperable Web 4.0 and Virtual Worlds: building blocks in priority areas (RIA) (Virtual Worlds Partnership)

Expected Outcomes:

- An early demonstration of the future Web 4.0 architectural framework (including protocols and standards) made up of key Open Source internet building blocks in priority areas: identity, software supply chain, open hardware, decentralised solutions & virtual worlds.
- The emergence of open and interoperable Web 4.0 and Virtual Worlds supported by EU based internet ecosystems centred on EU values and regulatory framework with high socio-economic impact, through the application of digital commons technologies and other Open Source solutions and open standards in several use cases.
- Supporting the transition from today's internet towards Web 4.0 where end-users have access to a more personalised and interactive experience through more collaborative, decentralised and user-centred approaches. Special attention will have to be given to security, scalability, and accessibility issues.
- New business opportunities and the emergence of new business and sustainability models based on Open Source.

Indicative budget: EUR 14.5 million

EU contribution per project: EUR 1-3 million

Type of Action: RIA



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Scope:

- **Identity management:** support deployment and adoption of the EU Digital Identity Wallet. Open Source solutions for the issuance and verification of electronic attestations and the provision of eIDAS trust services
- **Software Supply Chain security:** leverage related NGI building blocks/package solutions, e.g., traceability of code, collaborative trust models among contributors and users, detection of anomalous behaviour, ...
- **Open Hardware:** support the uptake of Open Hardware chips and tools through prototyping, productization and integration of real life cases.
- **Alternative solutions to centralised platforms:** integrating, testing and operation of Open Source decentralised solutions offering credible alternatives to users supporting the emergence of Web 4.0 and Virtual Worlds.
- **Web 4.0 demonstration for Virtual Worlds:** make use of existing Open Source building blocks for ensuring trust, interoperation, interconnection, transaction and resource access in Virtual Worlds applications and services.

At least one proposal in each area will be selected: proposals should clearly identify the area addressed

A maximum of 15% of total requested EU contribution may be allocated to FSTP selected through open calls



HORIZON-CL4-2025-03-HUMAN-17: Specific support for the Virtual Worlds Partnership and the Web 4.0 initiative (CSA) (Virtual Worlds Partnership)

Expected Outcomes (1):

- The delivery of a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for Virtual Worlds in Europe, for useful, open, interoperable, inclusive, sustainable and trustworthy virtual worlds systems and applications, ensuring Virtual worlds reflect EU values and principles.
- The delivery of a Strategic Research and Innovation agenda (SRIA) for Web 4.0 in Europe leading to an inclusive, trustworthy, interoperable, and human-centric Web 4.0 leveraging open-source commons building blocks enabling new social and sustainability models that respect European values.
- Established and running European Virtual Worlds Partnership supporting the European Virtual Worlds and Web 4.0 community.
- A strong and competitive ecosystem, with European companies playing a leading role in the adoption and acceptance, and in the development and deployment of Virtual Worlds technologies.



HORIZON-CL4-2025-03-HUMAN-17: Specific support for the Virtual Worlds Partnership and the Web 4.0 initiative (CSA) (Virtual Worlds Partnership)

Expected Outcomes (2):

- Reinforced links among initiatives in virtual worlds in Horizon Europe, Digital Europe Programme, and other programmes at EU, national and regional levels.
- Widespread awareness and outreach programmes
- Increased adoption of virtual worlds that are open, accessible and inclusive, interdisciplinary, safe and respect ethical values and European legal framework, including regarding privacy, security in all Member States and Associated Countries
- Standardisation methods for virtual worlds technologies and in support of the EU regulatory framework.

Indicative budget: EUR 2.5 million

EU contribution per project: EUR 2.5 million

Type of Action: CSA

