Urgent partner search for HR/employment and recruitment agencies and SME with data engineering capacities to join a project consortium applying for DIGITAL-2026-SKILLS-09-LEAGUE-OF-ACADEMIES - ELEVATE: European League of Advanced Digital Skills Academies

Summary

Profile type	Company's country	POD reference
Research & Development Request	**Germany**	**RDRDE20260213022**

Profile status	Type of partnership	Targeted countries
PUBLISHED	**Research and development cooperation agreement**	**• World**

Contact Person	Term of validity	Last update
Enrico FRANZIN	**16 Feb 2026** **16 Feb 2027**	**16 Feb 2026**

General Information

Short summary

A German university leading the ASPIRE consortium is looking for a)HR/employment organisations & recruitment agencies and b)SME with DSJP integration and data engineering capacity. The project will federate EU-funded advanced digital skills initiatives by delivering shared standards (Seal of Quality, micro-credential mechanism), cross-initiative instruments (mentoring, fellowships, job fairs, alumni network), and DSJP-embedded market intelligence.

Full description

ASPIRE (Academies Synergy for Pan-European Inclusion, Recognition and Excellence) is building a pan-European consortium of universities, national authorities, chambers of commerce, research centres, vocational education providers, and industry partners to coordinate Europe's advanced digital skills ecosystem under the ELEVATE framework.

This 48-month, 100%-funded project will unite Europe's advanced digital skills academies in AI, cybersecurity, quantum computing, semiconductors, and virtual worlds, delivering EU-wide virtual job fairs, mentoring programmes, an alumni network, and labour market intelligence.

The project operates across four strategic pillars:
1. Coordination of existing academies and initiatives
2. Capacity Building, including:
•   A Seal of Quality/Excellence for European ICT education and training
•   A cross-sectoral mentoring programme (6,000 participants, 45% women target)
•   Annual EU-wide virtual job & career fair (4 editions total over the project; ~8,000 participants across all editions)
•   A 10,000-member alumni network
3. Communication via the Digital Skills and Jobs Platform (DSJP)
4. Market intelligence on current and future labour market needs for ICT specialists

The ASPIRE consortium searches until 20 February 2026 the following partners to apply for DIGITAL-2026-SKILLS-09-LEAGUE-OF-ACADEMIES - ELEVATE (Deadline: 3 March 2026)
a) HR/recruitment partners are critical for delivering credible job fairs, providing employer-side labour market data, and ensuring training programmes lead to real employment outcomes.

b) The consortium specifically needs an SME to strengthen WP3 (DSJP Enablement, Data and Evidence Protocols) with hands-on technical capacity for platform integration, data engineering, and credential infrastructure. In short, the SME will deliver the DSJP integration architecture, KPI evidence pipeline, and validation tools for provider

Advantages and innovations

•   Strong multi-stakeholder consortium: Multi stakeholder partners across 13 countries, including leading universities, a national quality assurance authority, chambers of commerce representing 45,000+ SMEs, and specialised digital education organisations.
•   Direct access to Europe's advanced digital talent pool: Annual EU-wide virtual job & career fairs (4 editions, ~8,000 total participants) and a 10,000-member alumni network give HR partners early, structured access to graduates trained in AI, cybersecurity, quantum computing, semiconductors, and virtual worlds.
•   DSJP-centred architecture & market intelligence: All project outputs (Seal registry, training catalogue entries, market intelligence repository, alumni network, job fairs) are designed for native DSJP integration, not parallel platforms. Partners contribute to and benefit from a comprehensive analysis of ICT specialist supply and demand hosted on the EU's Digital Skills and Jobs Platform. This creates a significant technical implementation opportunity for the right partner.
•   Evidence-driven data infrastructure: The project builds a centralised data lake for KPI tracking, seal auditing, and market intelligence across all work packages, requiring robust data engineering, reporting pipelines, and auditability mechanisms.
•   100% EU funding: All eligible costs are fully funded as a coordination and support action under the Digital Europe Programme. Partners gain visibility as key contributors to the European Commission's flagship digital skills

Technical specification or expertise sought

a) HR agencies, recruitment organisations, employment services, and talent management firms with expertise in:

- Talent acquisition in advanced digital technology sectors (AI, cybersecurity, quantum, semiconductors, virtual worlds)
- Organisation of career fairs, job matching events, or virtual recruitment platforms
- Labour market analysis, skills gap assessment, or workforce planning for ICT sectors
- Cross-border talent mobility and international recruitment within Europe
- Recruitment of underrepresented groups in technology, especially women in tech

b) The consortium seeks an SME with strong capacity to deliver WP3 DSJP enablement and evidence infrastructure.
Required Capabilities
- Platform integration and APIs: Experience in EU or large-scale platform integration, secure REST APIs, and data pipelines
- Learning/credential metadata: Training catalogue entry building and validation, metadata schemas, and automated validation workflows
- Evidence and KPI data engineering: Data lake architecture, reporting pipelines, KPI dashboards, and auditability mechanisms
- Digital credentials: Familiarity with standards and issuance workflows such as verifiable credentials, open badges, or Europass-style credentials
- Security and GDPR compliance: Privacy-by-design, secure hosting, and access control
Preferred Experience
- Prior work with the DSJP or similar EU education/skills platforms
- Identity or credential wallet integration (e.g., EU Digital Identity Wallet, European Digital Credentials for Learning)
- Strong UX design for provider onboarding and self-service tools

Countries:
Partners from any eligible country are welcome, EU Member States not yet represented in the consortium are particularly welcome, including Belgium, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia,

Stage of development	Sustainable Development goals
Concept stage	• **Goal 4: Quality Education**
IPR Status	
No IPR applied	

IPR Notes

Partner Sought

Expected role of the partner

a) HR/Employment Organisations and Recruitment Agencies will:
- Co-deliver virtual job fairs: Recruit employers and mobilise job seekers/graduates for annual EU-wide virtual career fairs hosted on the DSJP.
- Provide labour market intelligence: Contribute employer-side data on hiring trends, skills requirements, and talent

• Support mentoring and alumni activation: Recruit industry mentors and connect the alumni network to employment opportunities.
• Inform quality standards: Ensure training curricula and the Seal of Quality reflect real employer hiring needs.

b) The SME will:
• Co-design and implement the DSJP-ready integration architecture for all project registries and outputs
• Strengthen the evidence pipeline for KPI tracking, Seal of Quality reporting, and market intelligence data collection
• Support technical documentation and validation tools for training providers applying for the seal
• Contribute to interoperability between the project's certification mechanism and DSJP hosting requirements

Type of partnership	Type and size of the partner
Research and development cooperation agreement	• **SME <=10**
	• **SME 50 - 249**
	• **R&D Institution**
	• **Other**
	• **University**
	• **SME 11-49**

Call Details

Framework program

Digital Europe

Call title and identifier

DIGITAL-2026-SKILLS-09-LEAGUE-OF-ACADEMIES

Submission and evaluation scheme

Anticipated project budget	Coordinator required
7,200,000	**No**

Deadline for EoI	Deadline of the call

20 Feb 2026

3 Mar 2026

Project duration in weeks

208

Web link to the call

https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/opportunities/funding/elevate-european-league-advanced-digital-skills-academies-digital-2026-skills

Project title and acronym

ASPIRE (Academies Synergy for Pan-European Inclusion, Recognition and Excellence)

Dissemination

Technology keywords

- **11002 - Education and Training**
- **01003013 - Information Technology/Informatics**
- **01003003 - Artificial Intelligence (AI)**
- **01003008 - Data Processing / Data Interchange, Middleware**

Market keywords

- **07005004 - Education and educational products and materials**
- **02007004 - Program development tools/languages**
- **02007002 - Database and file management**
- **02007016 - Artificial intelligence related software**
- **02007021 - Other Artificial intelligence related**

Targeted countries

- **World**

Sector groups involved

- **Digital**
- **Proximity & Social Economy**