



# **EU Blockchain and Startup Ecosystem**

Africa Blockchain Incubation Program

3 October 2024

Serena Dell'Agli  
Senior Technology Manager



European  
**DIGITAL SME**  
Alliance

**45.000** SMEs in the ICT sector

**30** National and regional associations from EU member states and neighbouring countries

**10** Active Working Groups

**150** Project proposals in which we are involved

**450** Experts involved in our Working Groups



# Overview of the EU Startup Ecosystem

## Dynamic Environment:

- Rapidly evolving and fostering innovation across various sectors

## EU Support Programs:

- **Horizon Europe:** 95.5 billion for research and innovation (2021 - 2027);
- **European Innovation Council:** grants of up to €2.5 million but also offers equity investments of up to €15 million.

## National Initiatives:

- **French Tech:** Government support through funding mechanisms, networking opportunities, and the creation of tech hubs, particularly in cities like Paris, Lyon, and Marseille;
- **Startup Estonia:** Supportive policies and consulting services;
- **Italian Startup Act:** Tax incentives and financial support.



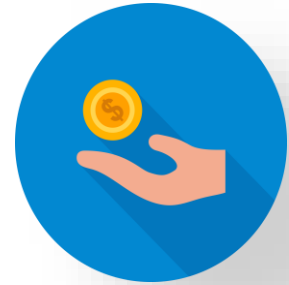
# Incubators, Accelerators, and Networking

## Accelerators and Incubators :

- **EIT Digital:** support for tech startups via acceleration programs that include mentorship, access to funding, and networking opportunities with industry leaders
- **Startupbootcamp:** a network of accelerators across Europe, providing mentorship, funding, and networking opportunities tailored to various sectors

## Emerging Sectors:

- **European Green Deal:** promoting sustainability and renewable energy startups.
- **Digital Europe Programme:** Supporting AI, cybersecurity, and digital transformation..
- **EU4Health:** Fostering innovation in the healthcare sector.



# FUNDING PORTAL

## Funding Opportunities for SMEs





Many different European funding opportunities for SMEs exist, but the good ones are often hidden in a jungle of too much information. To help you navigate through this jungle, we are constantly filtering out the best funding calls suitable for SMEs. Browse through them and apply today!

Notify me about new funding opportunities

Show  entries

Search:

Select a category:

Calls	Details	Deadline
 <p><b>Open Call for SMEs to access Innovate, Green and Digital or Global Grants</b> Posted: Apr 14, 2023 View: 1029 👍 10</p>	<p>Category: Sustainability Entrepreneurship Innovation Internationalisation support</p> <p>Funding amount: Up to €35.000</p> <p>Call Type: Funding calls for SME</p> <p>Eligibility (geography): EU Member States, Horizon Europe Associate countries, COSME Associated Countries</p>	<p>Jun 07, 2023</p>
 <p><b>Open Call for Experts in ICT Standardisation</b> Posted: May 12, 2023 View: 1494 👍 10</p>	<p>Category: Standards</p> <p>Funding amount: Up to €10.000</p> <p>Call Type: Call for experts</p> <p>Eligibility (geography): EU Member States, Horizon Europe Associate countries</p>	<p>Jul 10, 2023</p>
 <p><b>Open Call for Projects on Trustworthiness and Data Sovereignty</b> Posted: Apr 18, 2023 View: 1024 👍 10</p>	<p>Category: Cybersecurity and Data Protection Data Software Development Innovation</p> <p>Funding amount: Up to €50.000</p> <p>Call Type: Funding calls for SME</p> <p>Eligibility (geography): EU Member States, Horizon Europe Associate countries</p>	<p>Aug 01, 2023</p>
 <p><b>Open Call for a Greener, more Secure and Resilient Global Internet</b> Posted: May 22, 2023 View: 995 👍 10</p>	<p>Category: Technology</p> <p>Funding amount: Up to €50.000</p> <p>Call Type: Funding calls for SME</p> <p>Eligibility (geography): EU Member States, Horizon Europe Associate countries</p>	<p>Aug 01, 2023</p>

## HOW IT WORKS

On a routinely base, the best calls are selected by us, following the **seven categories' criteria** and posted on the portal

To access the information for projects' funding you need to **register** first to DIGITAL SME and join its community of digital innovators!



# BLOCKSTAND

Empowering European Experts' leadership  
in Blockchain Standardisation



Funded by  
the European Union





### Objective I

Support the **implementation of the Rolling Plan for ICT Standardisation** in international and European blockchain/ Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) standardisation scenes

### Objective II

**Reinforce the link with the European Blockchain Services Infrastructure (EBSI)** and the European Blockchain Partnership (EBP)

### Objective III

**Support the participation of European standardisation experts,** particularly from European start-ups, SMEs, academia and independent experts, in international and European Standard Developing Organisations

# What is a Standard?

- A **standard** is an agreed-upon set of guidelines, specifications, or requirements.
- It ensures **consistency, quality, and interoperability** across products, services, or processes.
- Standards are crucial for fostering **trust, efficiency, and compatibility within industries.**

## Types of Standards

### 1. De Facto Standards

- Developed through widespread industry adoption.
- Not created by formal organizations.
- Accepted due to market dominance (e.g., winning solutions used by various industries).
- Example: Popular technology protocols widely used in markets.

### 2. SDO Standards (De Jure Standards)

- Developed by **Standards Development Organizations (SDOs)**.
- Formal, structured, and agreed upon by industry.
- Ensure fairness and consensus in development.



# Standards vs. Regulations: Role and Impact

## Key Differences

**Standards:** Voluntary guidelines by SDOs

**Regulations:** Compulsory and legally binding

### Scope of Standards

- Define **minimum requirements**
- Support innovation, not strict design rules
- Ensure basic **interoperability** and **quality**

### Examples of SDOs

- ISO (International Organization for Standardisation)
- CEN/CENELEC (European Committee for Standardisation/European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation)
- ETSI (European Telecommunications Standards Institute)

# How Standards Drive Innovation

## **Key Benefits for Producers:**

- Avoid Duplication: Start from existing solutions for faster design
- Lower Design Costs: Fewer errors, quicker development

## **Reducing Risks & Enhancing Quality**

- Reduce Risks: Market-accepted solutions lower product failure
- Improve Quality: Proven standards ensure high-quality results

## **Additional Advantages**

- Faster Time-to-Market: Shorter design times, quicker releases
- Cross-Border Markets: Interoperability allows international sales
- Attract Customers: Reliable, competitive products build trust

**BlockStand.eu** – community of blockchain / DLT standardisation experts meeting under our **Blockchain Standardisation Facility & Community Tool**



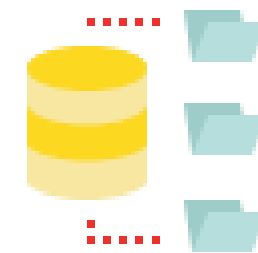
Report

on **Blockchain inclusion to the Rolling Plan**



**Experts' Selection Process**

with 400 000€ made available (min. 30-40 funded experts)



**Repository**

of Blockchain standardisation activities



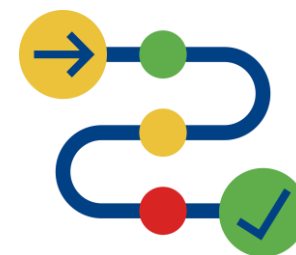
Standardisation

**Gaps & Recommendations' Atlas**



**BlockStand Stakeholder Forum**

Community of blockchain and DLT experts interested in standardisation activities



**European Blockchain Standardisation Roadmap**



**Experts' success stories**  
Europe's Blockchain Leadership Outlook

## Selection of Experts

- The selection process is open for submissions and evaluations take place every two months. **Next cut-off date: 15 October 2024**
- **Priority:** contributions in the areas of the Rolling Plan on ICT Standardisation
- **Types of deliverables:** technical (meetings) reports; new work items suggested in TCs; blockchain standards use cases; other outputs linked to participation in TCs of the European and international SDOs; etc.

**Total amount: 400.000 EUR**

- ❖ **30-40 experts** and **100** expert contributions
- ❖ **4.000 €** for each contribution (max. 3)
- ❖ Choice between **short-term** (3 months / 1 deliverable) or **long-term** (6-9 months / 2-3 deliverables) contributions

## Selection of Experts – eligibility criteria

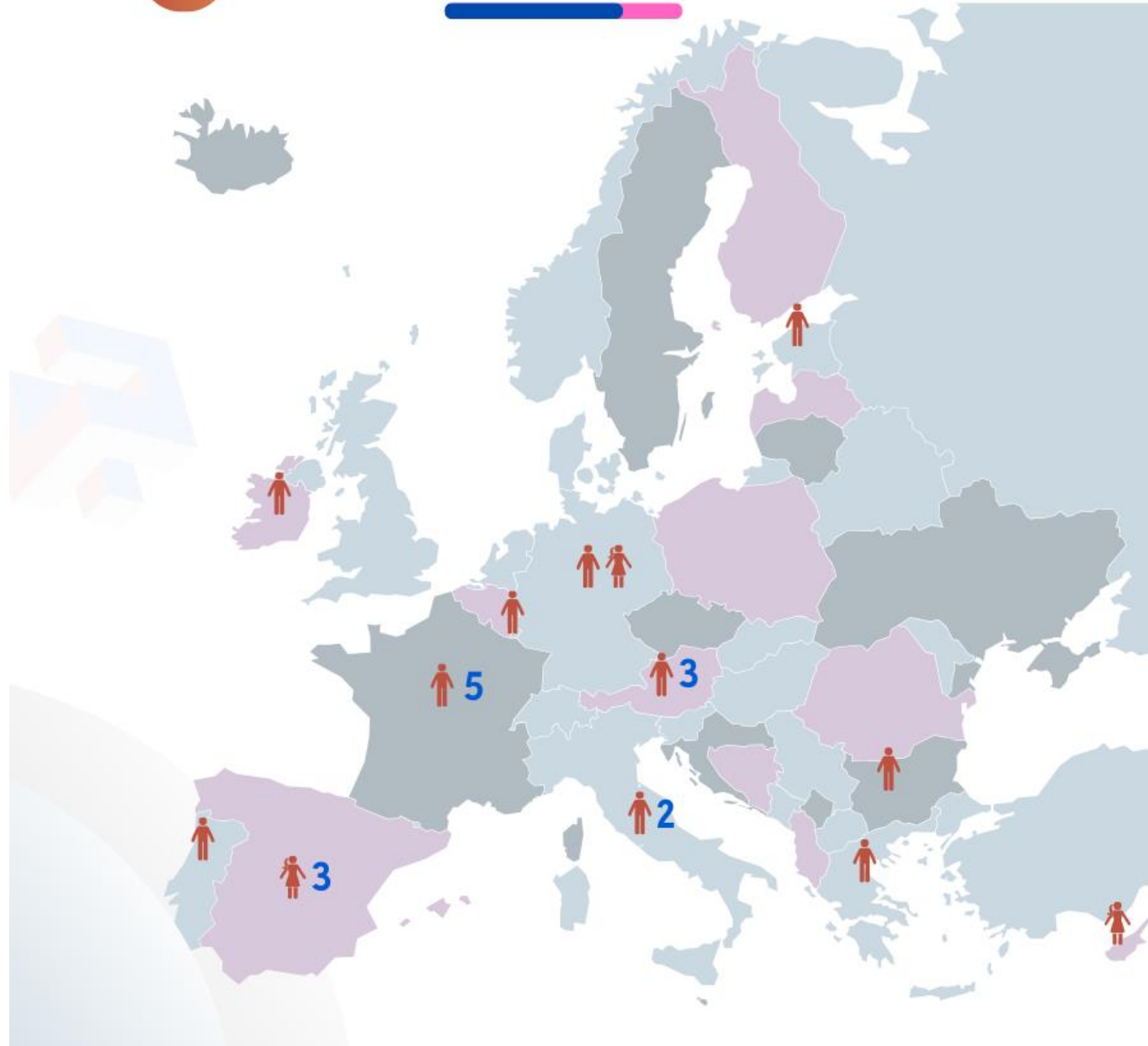
BlockStand is looking for experts that:

- ❖ Are individuals or natural persons residing in European Member States and are affiliated to entities established (or having significant business interests) in the EU Member States
- ❖ Have profound knowledge in the Blockchain, DLT and related fields and experience regarding developments of standards, e.g., in SDOs
- ❖ Are not already receiving financial support for the same proposed activities

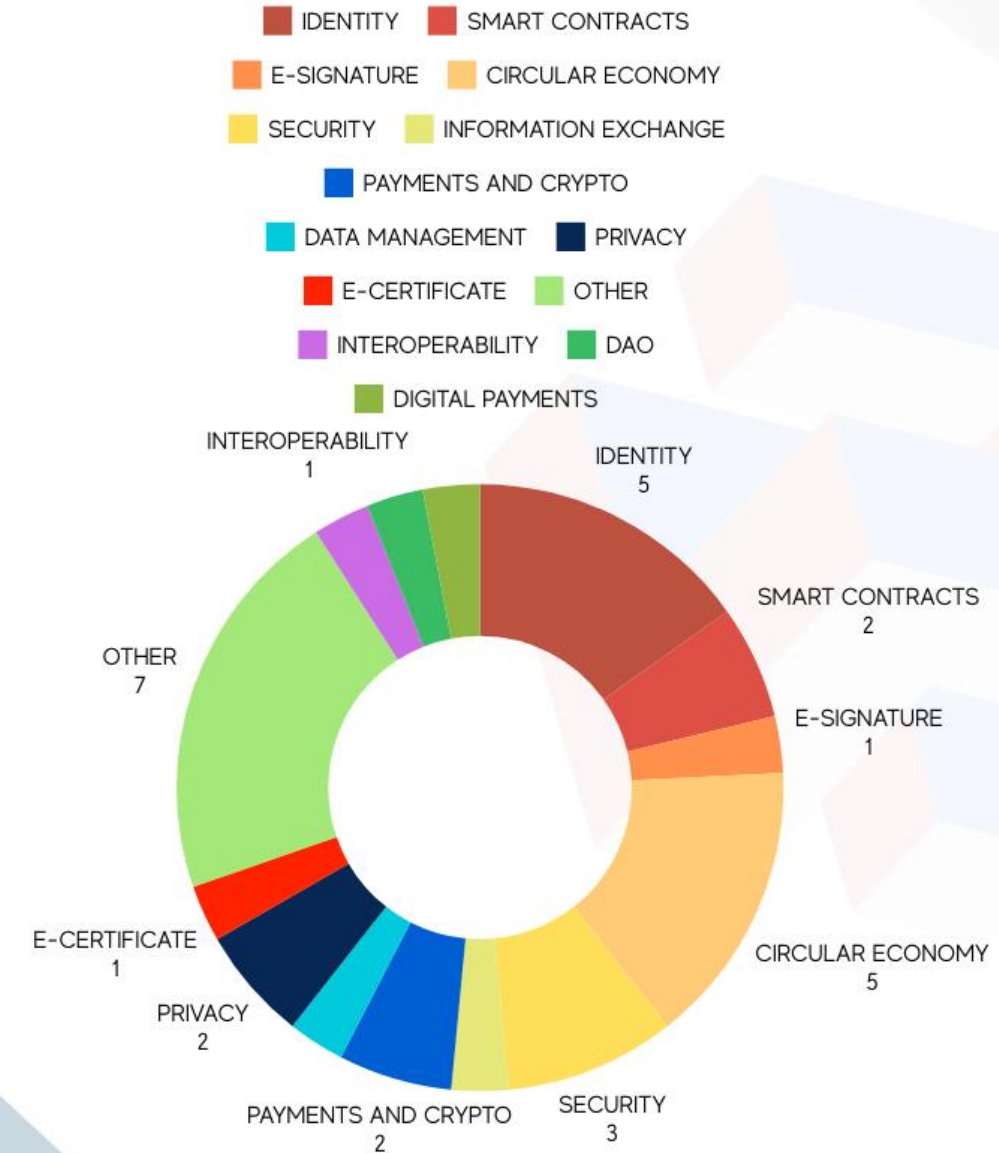


# Currently participating experts

## EXPERTS' NUMBERS



## MAIN TOPICS





# Online Repository of blockchain and DLT standards

APPLICATIONS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	KEYWORDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DOCUMENT TYPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DEVELOPED BY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> it-security (68)	<input type="checkbox"/> blockchain (67)	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard (46)	<input type="checkbox"/> IEEE (40)
<input type="checkbox"/> other (55)	<input type="checkbox"/> security (38)	<input type="checkbox"/> Group Specification or Group	<input type="checkbox"/> ETSI (33)
<input type="checkbox"/> information-technologies (49)	<input type="checkbox"/> distributed-ledger (34)	<input type="checkbox"/> report applicable to ETSI	<input type="checkbox"/> ISO (15)
<input type="checkbox"/> applications-in-banking (16)	<input type="checkbox"/> other (30)	<input type="checkbox"/> Specification groups (26)	<input type="checkbox"/> ITU-T (7)
<input type="checkbox"/> applications-in-other-fields (13)	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture (24)	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Report TR (16)	<input type="checkbox"/> CEN-CENELEC (1)
	<input type="checkbox"/> data (19)	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Specification TS (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> ITU (1)
	<input type="checkbox"/> interoperability (16)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> pdl (14)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> identity (12)		



# Thank you for your attention!

For more information:

- Serena Dell'Agli ([s.dellagli@digitalsme.eu](mailto:s.dellagli@digitalsme.eu))

Social media



BlockStand.eu

Website:

