PMO Partners Newsletter
April 2026

This edition brings together the latest funding developments, a spotlight opportunity in the EdTech space, and updates from our recent project activities shaping digital and emerging technology ecosystems.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE INTERNATIONAL FUNDING LANDSCAPE

€63.2 million in new Digital Europe funding for AI, health, skills and online safety

The European Commission has opened seven Digital Europe Programme calls **worth €63.2 million** to support AI in health, digital health systems, advanced digital skills, regulatory compliance tools, safer internet infrastructure, and research on online information integrity. The package includes €9 million for AI-powered medical image screening, €24 million for digital health services and systems, €12.5 million for advanced digital skills training,

New EU platform aims to unlock funding for Europe's bio-based future

The European Commission and the Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking have launched the **Bioeconomy Investment Deployment Group (BIDG)** to help bio-based projects overcome financing bottlenecks and scale beyond pilot and demonstration stages. The initiative is designed to address the "valley of death" facing many bioeconomy projects by developing more suitable financing instruments, improving market transparency, and connecting promising projects with investors and financial institutions.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY SPOTLIGHT

EIT Urban Mobility – EdTech Conference Open Call

EIT Urban Mobility is offering up to **€600,000** to support one project that will design and deliver the 2027 and 2028 editions of the EIT EdTech Conference. The selected project will be responsible for the full lifecycle of the event, including programme design, stakeholder engagement, communications, sponsorship, operational delivery, and reporting.

PMO Partners is currently looking to connect with SMEs interested in this call. If you have experience in event management, EdTech, or ecosystem-building, and are considering applying either individually or as part of a consortium, please feel free to get in touch.

Partner & Project Development Update

CELTIC-NEXT

We are glad to share that PMO Partners has supported the application of the **TRACA** project under the **CELTIC-NEXT Spring Call 2026.**

TRACA is conceived as a framework that integrates AI, quantum communications, XR, and cybersecurity into unified and secure systems that can be reused across sectors. The project aims to demonstrate how combining these technologies can support scalable and resilient digital ecosystems in application areas such as healthcare, agriculture, and education.

Let's Talk

If any of the topics above are relevant to your organisation — whether for project development, funding strategy, partnership-building, or regulatory orientation — we would be pleased to discuss them with you.

Türkiye: **Book a call with us**

International: **Book a call with us**

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The Environmental Impact of AI Usage: The Hidden Cost of Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming industries, but its environmental footprint is becoming an increasingly important concern. As AI systems scale across sectors, their energy/water usage and hardware demands are raising questions about the sustainability of digital transformation.

AI models, particularly large-scale systems used in machine learning and generative applications, require significant computational power. Training a single advanced AI model can consume as much electricity as hundreds of households use in a year. According to the International Energy Agency, data centres already account for around 1–1.5% of global electricity consumption (415 TWh), and this share is expected to grow as AI adoption accelerates up to 1065 TWh by 2030. The environmental impact of AI is driven largely by the energy-intensive infrastructure behind it which are the data centres itself which power AI applications. They rely on high-performance servers that run continuously and require substantial cooling systems.

Research from the University of Massachusetts Amherst found that training a large natural language processing model can emit over 280 t CO_2; another study reported that training GPT-3 generated 552 t CO_2 and GPT-4 generated up to 15,000 t CO_2. However, analyses by Meta AI, AWS SageMaker and Google show that 60–90 % of an LLM's life-cycle emissions come from inference, not training, which has continuous emissions over years.

Water Usage and Hardware Demand

Beyond electricity, AI systems also consume large volumes of water for cooling purposes (Just one data centre is estimated to use 11-19 million litres of potable water per day). A study by the University of California Riverside highlights that training and operating AI models can require millions of litres of water, particularly in large-scale data centres. Estimates show that data centres will be consuming up to 5 trillion litres of water by the early 2030s.

In addition, the production of specialized hardware for these data centers contributes to resource depletion and environmental degradation. The lifecycle impact of AI therefore extends beyond operation to include raw material extraction, manufacturing, and electronic waste.

Towards Sustainable AI Deployment

Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action across industry, policy, and research. The European Commission has increasingly emphasized the importance of “green AI” within its digital and climate strategies, promoting energy-efficient algorithms, sustainable data centres, and transparency in environmental reporting.

Companies are increasingly adopting a combination of strategies to reduce AI’s environmental footprint, including model optimization techniques such as quantization, pruning, distillation, and efficient routing between small and large models. Advances in hardware efficiency, including specialized AI accelerators and low-power architectures, further reduce energy consumption per computation. In parallel, carbon-aware scheduling and geographically distributed workload management are being used to align computing with lower-carbon energy sources. Investment in renewable-powered and more resource-efficient data center infrastructure, including improved cooling systems and potential heat reuse, is also becoming a key enabler of sustainable AI deployment. Additionally, growing regulatory pressure is driving improved carbon accounting and transparency across the AI lifecycle.

Balancing Innovation and Sustainability

AI remains a powerful tool for solving global challenges, including climate change itself. However, its rapid expansion must be balanced with responsible resource use and environmental awareness. As digital technologies continue to scale, integrating sustainability into AI development is no longer optional, but essential for ensuring that innovation does not come at the cost of the planet.