NGI Sargasso Open Call.

4th cut-off date

OPENING: 03 of June 2024

CLOSING: 01 of August 2024 at 17:00 Brussels time / 10:00AM CST\*

Project Website <https://ngisargasso.eu>

Open Call platform: <cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-open-call-4>

# Project Acronym

NGI Sargasso

# Full name of the EU funded project

Unique collaborative ecosystem and programme for promoting the transatlantic cooperation in NGI technologies.

# Grant agreement number

101092887

# Topic

Topic: HORIZON-CL4-2022-HUMAN-01-07

# Programme

Horizon Europe (HORIZON)

# Call title

NGI Sargasso 4th Open Call

# Opening date

03.06.2024

# Deadline model

single-stage

# Call deadline

01.08.2024 – 17:00 Brussels time

# Expected duration of participation

3-months. 6-months and 9-months

# Total funding available

1.050.000€

# Submission & evaluation process

NGI Sargasso 4th Open Call will support projects lead by Member States and Associated Countries in the field of Next Generation Internet that count with an effective collaboration with US and/or Canadian institutions.

Funding will be distributed only to the entities from eligible Member States and Associated Countries, although an effective collaboration is required.

**Submission & evaluation process**

Submissions will be done exclusively via online platform: <cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-open-call-4>

The **submission process** is supported by the following documents:

1. Online Form: completed via Sploro platform and divided in four sections (1) general profile of the applicants (2) alignment with the open call (3) excellence of the project and (4) impact.
2. Guidelines for Applicants:all the information you need to know before applying.
3. FAQ section: for usual doubts about our program.

In addition, it is mandatory to attach to the application a Support letter **from the US and/or Canada entity who will be the collaborative entity for the project.**

The evaluation process will last a maximum of three weeks from the closing of the call and will have 5 stages:

1. **Eligibility criteria:** An automatic filter will consider 8 criteria that all proposals must meet in order to be eligible.
2. **Experts’ remote evaluation:** An external evaluation board comprising experts in DLT domain, R&D, technology, and business development will review each proposal. Evaluators will score proposals based on 3 different evaluation criteria (Alignment, Excellence and Impact)
3. **Normalisation score:** This method would ensure a more balanced distribution of scores and reduce the possibility of biases and distortions.
4. **Interview stage:** Top-ranked projects from the remote evaluation are invited to participate in an online interview. Evaluators individually determine if the proposal should move forward based on a yes/no decision.
5. **Final Selection:** All proposals are ranked based on their remote evaluation scores and interview stage. In the event of a tie, a series of rules will be followed that will make it possible to reach a tiebreaker.

Prior to contracting to the top ranked applicants, the consortium will ask for the approval of the European Commission, and the list of selected projects will be submitted to the European Commission for final screening.

For more detailed information, you can consult the Guidelines of the call.

For any question about the process there is a general email address available at [helpdesk@ngisargasso.eu](mailto:helpdesk@ngisargasso.eu)

**Further information**

The purpose of this call is to provide support to EU MS and Associated Countries entities that would like to collaborate in research projects, within the Next Generation Internet field, with US and/or Canadian entities.

NGI Sargasso focuses on specific areas of knowledge critical to developing a more human-centric and sustainable internet. NGI Sargasso prioritizes the following **areas of knowledge**: Trust, Data sovereignty, Digital identity, Internet architecture and renovation, Decentralised technologies, Interoperability & Standardization and New Internet Commons.

Proposals submitted to the NGI Sargasso Open Call could use some of the following base technologies to address the challenges in the above areas of knowledge: Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and DLTs, Data, Cybersecurity, 6G and novel networks, IoT (Internet of Things), Open-source hardware and software, novel software architectures, etc.

The proposals are not limited only to the use of the technologies mentioned above.

The selected projects are expected to have a clear development component, going further than theoretical approaches or just mere studies.

NGI Sargasso has identified a set of **challenges** for this fourth cut-off date after conducting a series of interviews and surveys to dozens of experts in Europe, Canada and the USA. There are 9 concrete challenges and an open one. Proposals should be directed towards one of those (including the open challenge for NGI).

1. **Sustainable Digital Infrastructure Across Continents**
2. **Harmonized Cross-Atlantic Digital Governance**
3. **Inclusive Public Digital Spaces for Global Community Engagement**
4. **Enhanced Data Security and Privacy in Transcontinental Perspective**
5. **Interoperability and Standardisation Across Borders**
6. **Global Implementation of Decentralised Technologies**
7. **Next-Gen Cybersecurity and Generative AI**
8. **Next Generation Space Based Internet**
9. **Redefining intelligence in a hyperconnected world**
10. **Open Challenge**

**Financial Support**

NGI Sargasso offers financial support in the form of flat-rate grants to successful applicants to cover the project's personnel costs, direct costs, travels, and expenses related to the project. The justification of those grants will not be based in the form of administrative-financial cost statements but on the approval of deliverables agreed with NGI Sargasso team.

The program offers three types of grants based on the project's duration:

3-month experiment: up to EUR 50.000.

6-month experiment: up to EUR 75.000.

9-month experiment: up to EUR 100.000.

The maximum amount of funding that can be granted to a single organisation for all NGI Sargasso calls combined **cannot exceed EUR 150.000**. Except from large organisations such as RTOs and Universities, which maximum is **EUR** 500.000.

**OnCampus Programme**

NGI Sargasso offers mentoring, coaching, and networking opportunities to successful applicants to support them in achieving their project goals through the OnCampus Programme, which will be entirely online. The program is provided by Mobile World Capital Barcelona and offers personalized assistance, business guidance, expert insights, access to a vast network of key stakeholders, and marketing opportunities. The OnCampus Programme will be delivered through online platforms and tools, allowing applicants to participate remotely and access all program resources from anywhere in the world.

The participation on this programme will be compulsory for EU partners and optional for US/Canadian entities.

**Eligible beneficiaries**

The eligible countries are:

* The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions;
  + In the case of Hungary, although it is an MS of the EU, according to Council Implementing Decision 2022/2506, no legal commitments should be entered into with any public interest trust established based on the Hungarian Law IX of 2021 or with any entity maintained by said public interest trust.
* The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States;
* Horizon Europe associated countries at the time the NGI Sargasso grant entered into force (January 1, 2023), which are: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. The ones not included in this list are not eligible.

**The eligible entities by NGI Sargasso open call should be legally identified under the following categories of organisations:**

1. Universities, RTOs and research centres: **academic and research institutions with a focus on developing novel knowledge areas and technologies aligned with the focus of NGI Sargasso.**
2. NGOs and foundations: **non-profit organizations and foundations that work under the NGI areas of knowledge and technologies.**
3. SMEs and startups: **small and medium-sized enterprises and startups that focus on developing innovative solutions related to NGI Sargasso’s areas of focus.**

**It is important to note that for an application to be accepted, the Member States and Associated Countries applicant must be supported by an entity from the US and/or Canada. These entities should be included via signed-support letter.**

**Moreover,** only the Member States and Associated Countries entities will receive financial support**.**

**To facilitate this process, NGI Sargasso consortium provides a** [**brokerage system**](http://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-brokerage-service) **that enables applicants to identify potential partners and submit joint proposals, if there is not a previous link established among EU and US/Canadian entities.**

Language in which applicationshould be submitted: **English**

Web address for further information: [**https://ngisargasso.eu/**](https://ngisargasso.eu/)

Email address for further information: [**helpdesk@ngisargasso.eu**](mailto:helpdesk@ngisargasso.eu)

Open call submission platform: [**cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-open-call-4**](https://sploro.sharepoint.com/sites/Proyectos/Documentos%20compartidos/GESTIÓN%20EUROPEOS/2-%20Gestión/02-Proyectos/20230101_SARGASSO/03-Execution/WP3_Open_Call_Management/NGISargasso_OC4/Call%20for%20applicants/cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-open-call-4)