



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, CONTENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Digital Excellence and Science Infrastructure  
The Director

### ***WORKING GROUP ON CO-DESIGNED SERVICES FOR DESTINATION EARTH***

#### ***SUB-GROUP TO THE INFORMAL COMMISSION EXPERT GROUP***

#### ***DESTINATION EARTH COORDINATION GROUP (E03780)***

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Destination Earth (DestinE) is an EU flagship initiative responding to the twin challenge of the green and digital transition, developing a very high precision digital model of the Earth (a digital twin of the Earth) to monitor and simulate natural and human activity, and to develop and test scenarios that would enable more sustainable development and support European environmental policies.

The Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology ('DG CONNECT') is leading the DestinE initiative, and implements it through contribution agreements entrusted to the following three leading international organisations in the field: European Space Agency (ESA), European Centre for Medium- Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) and European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT). The initiative is funded from the Digital Europe Programme (DEP) through three phases during 2022-2030, and additional research and innovation related is provided from the Horizon Europe programme.

The first implementation phase was finalised in mid 2024 and the first full version of the DestinE system, composed of a core service platform, data lake and the two initial digital twins on climate change adaptation and extreme weather events, became operational. The current (second) implementation phase continues until mid 2026 and focuses on further development of the system and user uptake.

The role of the Destination Earth Coordination Group is to foster cooperation and synergies at European, national and regional level and to ensure close involvement of Member States and the third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme in the co-design, planning, monitoring and evolution of the initiative. The sub-group shall focus on the co-design aspect to leverage the Destination Earth operational system and its scientific and technological capabilities for the Member States and third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme. The co-design of new innovative tailored services for coping with the effects of climate change and extreme weather events will enable a unique angle for joint development at European level and focus on the specific needs with common attributes to the users in several Member States and third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme.

The sub-group shall bring together sectoral Member State experts to discuss, propose, and develop a roadmap for co-designed services and applications at transnational, national, regional, and local levels. The roadmap shall describe a jointly agreed method for the service

development, define priority areas and services needed and the proposed implementation mechanism, including the co-funding structure. The sub-group is initially established for a 12-month period, with the possibility of extension until its tasks are finalised.

For any aspect not explicitly mentioned in these terms of reference, the sub-group shall operate in compliance with the terms of reference and rules of procedure of Destination Earth Coordination Group (E03780) and the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups ('the horizontal rules')<sup>1</sup>.

## **2. SUBJECT MATTER**

The Working Group on co-designed services for Destination Earth ("the co-design sub-group"), a sub-group to the informal Commission expert group Destination Earth Coordination ("the main group"), is set up.

## **3. TASKS**

The co-design sub-group's task shall be

to develop a roadmap for designing, developing and implementing new innovative services and applications, based on the Destination Earth system, to be used by Member States and third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme to address their specific needs in adapting and mitigating to the effects of climate change and extreme weather events.

Building on the members' national and international expertise, the roadmap shall:

- (1) propose a suitable methodology for co-design that can be used for creating the services and applications across Member States and third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme;
- (2) define the priority areas and impact sectors (e.g. forest fires, floods, urban adaptation, heat / cold stress, renewable energy, water resources, agriculture, marine and coastal challenges) where new joint services and applications are needed;
- (3) describe the general attributes of the individual services and applications to guide technical and functional implementation;
- (4) suggest a funding and governance framework for the proposed services and applications as well as a timeline for its implementation.

## **4. MEMBERSHIP**

1. Members shall be Member States, third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme and other public entities.

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<sup>1</sup> C(2016) 3301.

2. Member States and third countries associated to the Digital Europe Programme shall nominate their representatives and shall be responsible for ensuring that their representative provides high level of expertise.
3. The observers to the main group may also be observers of the sub-group.

## **5. OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

4. The sub-group shall be chaired by DG CONNECT, which shall also act as the secretariat of the sub-group.
5. The sub-group shall nominate (a) rapporteur(s) in charge of drafting the roadmap.
6. The sub-group shall report to the main group and act under its mandate in advising the European Commission.
7. The findings of the sub-group shall be submitted to the Destination Earth Coordination Group which shall be solely responsible for making recommendations to the European Commission.
8. The sub-group shall cease to exist once the roadmap as described in section 3 has been presented to and accepted by the Chair (DG CONNECT).

Done in Brussels, on 2 May 2025