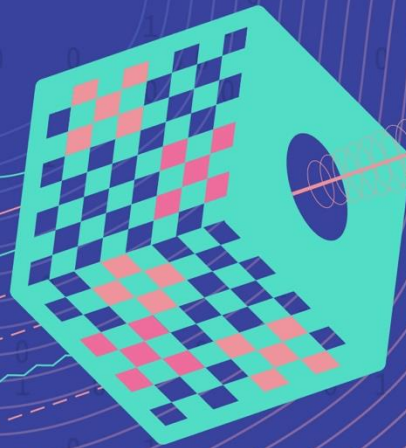# CASSINI #EUSpace
Hackathons & Mentoring

Application Guide for[1]
local organisers

9th & 10th
CASSINI Hackathons

Implemented by

VERHAERT | MASTERS IN INNOVATION   **NOVASPACE**

Application Guide

This guide is intended to provide you with all the information you need for applying to the open call for local organisers for the ninth and tenth editions of the CASSINI Hackathons on **16-18 May 2025** and **7-9 November 2025 respectively.**

Contents

CASSINI Hackathons & Mentoring

The CASSINI Hackathons & Mentoring is the first action in the implementation of CASSINI, the European Commission's new initiative to support innovative entrepreneurs, start-ups, and SMEs in the space industry, including New Space, during 2021-2027.

The CASSINI Hackathons are a series of semi-annual hackathons that tackle global challenges with European space technologies. Each hackathon is a hybrid event that takes place in 10 different locations across Europe simultaneously. The purpose is to bring together young entrepreneurs, technologists, and researchers from around Europe and to provide an attractive environment to develop innovative applications and learn about the European space programmes. Participants will be supported with training resources and dedicated sessions on how to access these data and services and with training to publicly showcase their solutions. The three winners of each hackathon receive access to the CASSINI Mentoring, a tailor-made mentoring and coaching scheme.

VERHAERT New Products & Services and Novaspace form the core team implementing the CASSINI Hackathons & Mentoring action on behalf of the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA).

Open call for local organisers

With this call, we are looking for partners who are motivated to support the next generation of space-based entrepreneurs by becoming a local organiser. Our local organisers co-organise the hybrid event on a local level, implementing the hackathon concept across Europe.
As a local organiser, you have the opportunity to host a hackathon location within the framework of the CASSINI Hackathons. This allows you to engage with your local ecosystem to solve important problems for industry and government with the power of space technologies. In addition, you will be able to expand your European network and position your organisation in the leading space entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Timeline for the ninth hackathon

The dates for the 9th CASSINI Hackathon stated below can be subject to change due to decisions of the European Commission or the European Union Agency for the Space Programme. In case the dates change after your application or selection as local organiser, you will have the opportunity to decide if you still want to be a local organiser for this edition of the CASSINI Hackathons.

Key dates to consider for the 9th CASSINI Hackathon:

- 12 December 2024: Start of the open call for local organisers

- 20 January 2025: Deadline for the open call for local organisers

- 6 February 2025: Onboarding and start preparation phase

- 10 March 2025: Start promotion campaign and registrations

- From 28 April until 8 May 2025: The Big Ideas Campaign

- From 16 until 18 May 2025: The Hackathon Weekend

- 21 May 2025: The Demo Day and Awards Ceremony

Timeline for the tenth hackathon

The dates for the 10th CASSINI Hackathon stated below can be subject to change due to decisions of the European Commission or the European Union Agency for the Space Programme. In case the dates change after your application or selection as a local organiser, you will have the opportunity to decide if you still want to be a local organiser for this edition of the CASSINI Hackathons.

Key dates to consider for the 10th CASSINI Hackathon:

- 12 December 2024: Start of the open call for local organisers

- 20 January 2025: Deadline for the open call for local organisers

- 6 May 2025: Onboarding and start preparation phase

- 8 September 2025: Start promotion campaign and registrations

- From 15 until 22 October 2025: The Big Ideas Campaign

- From 7 until 9 November 2025: The Hackathon Weekend

- 12 November 2025: The Demo Day and Awards Ceremony

Application process

Eligibility criteria

Local organisers must be a legal entity established in the territory of a Member State of the European Union or a non-EU country associated with Horizon Europe (list here) or a country that is in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement where the agreement applies before the award.
Only applications from eligible countries will be considered for evaluation.

Applicants must have demonstrated experience in organising hackathons, innovation competitions, or providing innovation support such as business incubator or accelerator operations. Applicants must also have the organisational capability to host a hackathon location.

Upon receiving your application, and should we decide to proceed with your organisation's candidacy as a Local Organiser, you will be required to provide the following documents in a timely manner to verify your organisation's eligibility:

- **An extract of the company's registration.**
- **The completed Declaration(s) of Honour (Annex I.B)**:
- This document must be filled out, signed, and dated.
- It should be signed either with a Qualified Electronic Signature (QES) or with a physical signature by the company's legal representative.

How to apply?

If you want to become a local organiser for one of the CASSINI Hackathons, you must prepare and submit the following documents:

An application document based on the application template for local organisers

A budget based on the budget template for local organisers

Your application document should be brief and answer the questions in the template. You can provide additional information, if relevant for your application. But please, do not write a lengthy document.

You must submit the application documents and any attachments through the form available at the link: cassini.eu/hackathons/form/organiser-application.
The application deadline for the ninth and tenth CASSINI Hackathons is **January 20, 2025 at 23:59 CET.**

Evaluation criteria

Your application will be evaluated based on three criteria:

- The quality of the plan for communication and promotion of the hackathon, and the commitment to the number of participants. Weight: 33%.

- The involvement of relevant contributing partners (companies, universities, public entities etc.). Weight: 33%.

- The capability to organise a CASSINI hackathon and ensure digital collaboration between the hackathon participants and allow for individuals to join the event at a remote location. This includes experience in the use of ICT technologies, and event location well located and reachable by public transport. Weight: 33%.

Evaluation process

Your application must be submitted before the deadline and must be complete. Incomplete applications and those received after the deadline, will not be accepted for evaluation. An evaluation board, composed of jury members from the European Commission, the European Agency for the Space Programme and the central organizers (VERHAERT New Products & Services and Novaspace) will review, and evaluate the application documents and score them according to the evaluation criteria and their associated weighting factors.

The evaluation board will ensure a geographic spread across the eligible countries:

- A maximum of two local organisers from the same country can be selected per hackathon edition, provided that these two hackathon locations are organised in different cities. In case multiple applications are received for a hackathon location in one city, only the highest-scored application will be considered for selection. In case multiple applications are received for a hackathon location in one country, then only the two highest-scored applications will be considered for selection.

- In case more than 10 applications are received, preference will be given to **new locations**, where no hackathon has been organised previously.

The evaluation board will select **up to 10 local organisers** based on their ranking and the above rules. Applications should have a minimum score of 60% to be selected. In case that local organisers receive the same score, the representatives of the European Commission and EUSPA on the evaluation board will make the final decision about which application will be selected.

After the selection of local organisers, the contact persons mentioned on the application documents will be informed of the decision. While the process is usually shorter, this can take up to one month after the closing date of the call.

In case you are not selected as a local organiser, you can ask the core team for feedback on why your application was not selected in a verbal debriefing.

In case you are selected, the core team will take steps to sign the necessary documents and start the onboarding process.

Good to know

Activities promoting or related to alcohol, tobacco, religion, politics, intolerance, violence, firearms, pornography, obscenity, gambling, or illegal drugs are explicitly excluded from this open call.

Hackathon journey

As a local organiser, you will be the anchor point for participants in their hackathon journey. This section provides a conceptual example of the hackathon concept. This should provide you with sufficient detail to formulate your application.

Planning & preparation

After selection, the core team will extend local organiser agreements and onboard the local organisers. An introduction meeting will be held to align all local organisers. Local organisers will also receive access to the platforms and tools through which the event will be run in this period.

Following onboarding, local organisers start planning and preparing the hackathon in their location. It is up to local organisers to make all necessary arrangements to produce a successful local hackathon. This includes but is not limited to the following activities:

- Event planning and preparation

- Contracting local suppliers

- Setting up the local infrastructure

- Engaging local facilitators and experts

- Involving relevant partners from the local ecosystem

Local organisers are expected to join the weekly coordination calls with the core team and all other local organisers. These calls are intended to share information, provide training (on the platforms & tools, communication & promotion, etc.) and for questions and feedback. Weekly calls will run from the week after the selection communication until the week after Demo day. Training and coordination calls will be about 1 hour long, other calls may as well be shorter.

Communication & promotion

The next milestone is the start of the communication and promotion activities. For the 9th CASSINI Hackathon, promotion activities should begin on the 10th of March 2025; for the 10th CASSINI Hackathon, promotion activities should begin around beginning of September 2025. With the start of the campaign, the registrations for the hackathon will open. Local organisers should have the key content for the website prepared by this date (venue, sponsors, prizes, etc.).

Local organisers are responsible for attracting high-quality participants for their hackathon location. Therefore, they should run a communication and promotion campaign to selected target groups in their local ecosystem. The core team will work closely with local organisers to support their communication and promotion efforts by providing help on a local marketing strategy and plan, paid advertising on social media, and the creation of local marketing collateral.

The Big Ideas Campaign

A few weeks before the hackathon, we will run a campaign to promote the hackathon. This campaign explores the theme, challenges, and inspires participants with the possibilities of space technologies and calls them to action.

The Big Idea Campaign for the 9th CASSINI Hackathon will take place from 28 April until 8 May 2025. The Big Idea Campaign for the 10th CASSINI Hackathon will take place from 15 until 22 October 2025. Over the course of the campaign, both the core team and the local organisers will host a number of virtual/hybrid sessions. Those interested in participating in the hackathon will be able to pick and choose from the programme.

As a local organiser you are responsible for organising and facilitating the local side of the Big Ideas Campaign. Local organisers should host at least one virtual/hybrid sessions:

- A local info session to inform about the hackathon or

- Optional: A theme or technology-related session to inspire participants

We are interested to learn from your application how you would like to fill in the Big Ideas Campaign for your hackathon location within this framework.

The Hackathon Weekend

The hackathon itself will take place over a weekend; specifically:

- 9th Hackathon: from the **16th to the 18th of May 2025**.

- 10th Hackathon: from the **7th to the 9th of November 2025**.

The program is the same for both.

Friday evening

The kick-off of the event will take place on Friday evening with a plenary welcome from the organisers at the central virtual hub. Hackathon locations are then welcomed to follow up with their own welcome sessions for local participants.

After the kick-off and a possible last-minute team formation session, the hacking starts. Hackathon participants can then start working with their team. This first evening is an excellent opportunity for shaping and defining the idea for the hackathon project. Local organisers are responsible to facilitate the innovation process and coach the teams during the hackathon.

Saturday

On Saturday morning, the hacking continues after a short plenary reboot session. Teams will be encouraged to work both on validating the problem and building a solution for it. Local organisers are responsible for facilitating the innovation process, providing check-in or training sessions as necessary and making available experts who can help the teams in a one-on-one setting. Local organisers can design this part of the programme based on their own capabilities and those of their partners. It is recommended to offer both technical and business support, so that different profiles in the teams can find the support they require.

Throughout the day, the central virtual hub will have a rotating live coverage of the hackathon locations in 15-second intervals. Local organisers are responsible for establishing a continuous live feed within a communal space at their hackathon venue. The live stream rotation may be occasionally interrupted by video messages pre-recorded by EUSPA, DG DEFIS, other authorities, mentors or past editions winners.

Local organisers can offer on-site hacking during the Saturday night but are not required to do so.

Sunday

On Sunday, the hacking continues. The teams will be working mainly on their prototype, but also need to create a pitch presentation. Local organisers should provide adequate support to help the teams deliver a compelling pitch. At the end of the hacking phase, all teams are required to submit a summary of their project, the prototype they worked on and their pitch presentation.

Local organisers will then organise a local pitch round and award ceremony. **A common scoring matrix is to be used across all hackathon locations.** For the rest, local organisers can also shape this part of the hackathon.

The live stream from the central virtual hub again integrates local stories and footage with other video reports. The weekend ends with a closing session for all participants, organisers, crew members, facilitators, experts, and other audiences.

We are interested to learn from your application how you would like to fill in the Hackathon Weekend for your hackathon location within this framework.

The Demo Day

In the week following the hackathon, the local winners compete in a pitch round at European level. The Demo Day for the 9th CASSINI Hackathon takes place on the **21st of May 2025**. The Demo Day for the 10th CASSINI Hackathon takes place on the **12th of November 2025**.

In this virtual evening event, the local winners compete to be selected among the top three teams in the CASSINI Hackathon. The teams will pitch their idea to a professional jury and will be evaluated based on a common set of evaluation criteria. Finally, the overall winners are announced at the award show immediately following the evaluations.

This part of the hackathon event is organised by the core team and facilitated by the central virtual hub. Local organisers are responsible for helping the local winners prepare their pitch for the Demo Day. In addition, they should encourage other teams to join the event and facilitate this if possible.

After the event

The core team and the local organisers will work together on the ex-post communication. Local organisers are required to provide a final report on their activities and results.

Theme and challenges

9th CASSINI Hackathon Theme: 'Space for Healthcare'

The 9th CASSINI hackathon will challenge participants to develop new products and services using the EU space technologies to transform healthcare and improve public well-being.

By leveraging satellite data, healthcare providers, policymakers, and organizations can enhance health services, respond to critical challenges, and promote equitable access to care. From forecasting disease outbreaks and health risks based on climate patterns, air quality and/or population movement to enhancing smart emergency healthcare delivery and services, space technologies provide powerful tools to safeguard and advance public health. Copernicus, Galileo, and EGNOS offer a comprehensive range of space data to drive healthcare, strengthen mental health, and enable impactful medical innovations.

Challenge #1: Monitoring Disease Outbreaks and Health Risks

Environmental and climate conditions influence public health, creating new risks or amplifying existing ones. Chronic conditions such as asthma, cardiovascular or kidney diseases, and respiratory illnesses are exacerbated by air pollution, extreme heat, and shifting weather patterns. Similarly, climate conditions

can affect the prevalence of vector-borne diseases, like malaria and the development of viruses or pandemics. Space technologies provide a valuable resource to understand and address these issues.

This challenge calls on participants to develop products, devices, or services that leverage European space data, information and signals from Copernicus and Galileo or future services using IRIS2 to forecast and monitor health risks and disease outbreaks. We encourage participants to dive into the areas of:

- **Health Risks Prediction and Mapping:** Use Copernicus data to identify environmental factors, like air quality and heatwaves, that foster health risks and create risk maps and protection tools. Develop predictive models to forecast disease patterns based on climate trends, environmental changes, and population movement and behaviors.
- **Disease Tracking and Outbreak:** Identify hotspots for viruses and diseases like malaria by monitoring environmental changes and water body conditions.
- **Consumer apps and tools:** Create tools that combine satellite data and personal health metrics to provide guidance for mitigating health risks.

Challenge #2: Smart Emergency Healthcare Delivery

Access to timely and effective healthcare is a cornerstone of a resilient society, yet many communities face significant challenges in receiving adequate medical care due to geographical, logistical, or situational barriers. Innovative solutions that harness space technologies can transform healthcare delivery, making it more accessible, efficient, and responsive to diverse needs.

This challenge tasks participants to develop products, devices, or services that leverage European space data, information and signals from Copernicus and Galileo or future services using IRIS2 to enhance healthcare delivery and services. Possible areas for development include:

Remote medical delivery (Telemedicine): Utilize satellite communication to provide remote medical aid (consultations, diagnostics, treatment guidance and monitoring) from afar and improve patient care and engagement.

Medical Services Delivery and Logistics: Create solutions to optimize the delivery of medical aid, supplies, vaccines especially to especially to hard-to-reach or health-crisis-affected (pandemics, natural disasters) regions. Utilize drones, autonomous vehicles on land or water for effective and timely delivery.

Support Search and Rescue Operations: Leverage Galileo's Search and Rescue (SAR) services to provide emergency medical aid to individuals in danger and develop tools to streamline the coordination between rescue teams and healthcare providers.

Challenge #3: Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental health and well-being are crucial for a thriving society but are increasingly impacted by environmental factors like air quality, heatwaves, and urban noise levels. These stressors can exacerbate mental health challenges, affecting individuals and communities. Space technologies provide invaluable resources for understanding these impacts and offering actionable solutions to improve well-being.

This challenge tasks participants to develop products, devices, or services that leverage European space data, information and signals from Copernicus and Galileo or future services using IRIS2 to monitor, assess, and improve mental health and well-being. Possible areas for exploration include:

- **Environmental Stress Monitoring:** Use Copernicus environmental data to analyze factors like sunlight intensity, air pollution, extreme temperatures, and urban green space availability, to assess their effects on mental health.
- **Personalized Well-Being Support:** Design solutions that integrate environmental data with user-specific inputs to recommend daily activities tailored to individual preferences and needs.
- **Urban Management and Planning:** Develop solutions that integrate environmental and mental health indicators, enabling urban planners to create healthier living environments.

Copernicus, Galileo, and EGNOS offer a comprehensive range of space data to drive precision healthcare, strengthen resilience, and enable impactful medical innovations.

10th CASSINI Hackathon Theme: 'Consumer Experiences'

In the 10th CASSINI Hackathon, participants are challenged to create solutions that use European space technologies to advance consumer experiences in industries such as gaming, sports, and tourism.

From revolutionising gaming with Earth imagery to optimising sports performance and reimagining travel, space technology and data offers new possibilities for consumers to be entertained and to interact with their environment in innovative and creative ways.

Whether it's gaming for entertainment or to drive awareness, improving sports performance with real-time satellite data, or enabling smarter, more enjoyable or more sustainable travel, space technologies can enrich everyday life.

Challenge #1: Immersive Gameplay with Space Technology & Data

Unleash the potential of space technologies to revolutionise the gaming world. Use cutting-edge space assets, such as Copernicus Earth observation data, Galileo positioning services, and satellite connectivity to create immersive, thrilling, or science-driven gaming experiences.

Design a detailed game concept that leverages one or more of these assets: Copernicus for realistic terrain, weather patterns, or environmental monitoring; Galileo for precise positioning and navigation in dynamic gameplay; or satellite connectivity for real-time updates or enhanced multiplayer scenarios.

Develop core gameplay mechanics that creatively integrate these technologies, explaining how players will interact with features like resource management, exploration, or real-time event responses to deliver

an engaging experience that blends strategy, science, and adventure.

Challenge #2: Space-Powered Performance – Transforming Sports

Leverage EU Space technology and data to push the boundaries of sports performance and fan engagement. Use space technologies such as Galileo, Copernicus Earth observation data, and satellite connectivity to improve athlete training, enhance audience experiences, and optimise real-time sports analytics and insights.

Design a detailed concept that demonstrates how space assets can be applied to:

Sports performance: Utilise GNSS for precise athlete tracking and analytics with wearable technologies, or satellite imagery to create training plans that consider terrain, weather, and elevation in real time.

Fan engagement: Develop immersive AR applications that use live satellite data to enhance extreme sports experiences, visualising stats such as altitude, wind speed, and location.

Show how space innovation can redefine the playing field by creating solutions that are data-driven, impactful, and engaging.

Challenge #3: Beyond Horizons – Redefining Travel with Space Innovation

Use space technologies to transform how we explore and experience the world. Leverage assets such as satellite navigation, Copernicus Earth observation data, or climate monitoring tools to create solutions that promote sustainable tourism, interactive travel experiences, and personalised adventures. Bring travellers closer to Earth's beauty while supporting environmental preservation.

Your solution should focus on:

- Leveraging satellite imagery, Galileo positioning, or Copernicus data to enhance personalised and safer travel experiences.
- Promoting sustainable and environmentally conscious exploration.
- Creating immersive or interactive travel solutions that connect people to the planet in innovative ways.
- Enable travel providers to enhance their services to craft unforgettable, eco-conscious journeys.

We are interested in learning from your application what your link is with the themes.

Local participants and teams

![CASSINI #EUSpace Hackathons & Mentoring logo]

Participants must register as individual, natural persons for a hackathon location. They must be of legal adult age and must reside either in the European Union (any country) or in the non-EU country associated with Horizon Europe (or in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement where the agreement applies before the award) where the hackathon is taking place.

The goal is to attract committed participants with technological experience and an entrepreneurial spirit, and to build new teams around ideas that have the potential to last beyond the hackathon. Participants can be students, industry professionals, researchers from academia, people working for governments or non-profits, etc. Before the hackathon, participants should have the opportunity to brainstorm new ideas and form teams around these ideas. Only teams that consist of **at least three participants, with at least one business and one technical profile**, and tackle a problem within one of the challenges can take part in the hackathon.

In order to ensure that all teams start from the same point and to stimulate new concepts and ideas, the hackathon has a fresh code rule (i.e., all code must be written at the hackathon or publicly available). **The event is thus not intended as an opportunity for existing start-ups to pitch their product.**

Local organisers can determine how many participants they will host based on their capabilities. Please indicate and explain how many participants/teams you expect in your application. **We believe each hackathon location should have at least 50 active participants in 10 to 12 teams.**

Local partners and sponsors

We believe real innovation comes from collaboration across organisations. Therefore, we strongly encourage local organisers to work with other organisations from their local ecosystem.

It is up to the local organisers to gather the support of local partners that they believe are needed to run a high-quality local hackathon. We believe a local organiser and its partners should cover the aspects of business & innovation, space technology, digital technologies, international development, and humanitarian activities. Local partners can be incubators and accelerators (from inside or outside the space community), technology companies (e.g., those working with emerging digital technologies, or from the space sector), businesses and organisations working in healthcare or consumer industry etc.

These partners can have different roles or add value in different ways:

- Support the promotion of the event

- Act as challenge owner for one of the challenges

- Provide interesting space or in-situ datasets related to the challenges

- Provide expertise on how to work with space data and signals or emerging digital technologies

- Help facilitate the innovation process and coach teams

- Sponsor the venue, equipment, a prize, etc.

- …

These partners can have different reasons to collaborate on the hackathon event and become part of the community. Some are interested in broadening their networks and connecting with entrepreneurial innovators. Others want to learn more about the possibilities of EU space data and signals in their sector, or they want to contribute toward solving important global challenges.

Please note that we require one organisation to take the lead, as local organiser.

Competition and prizes

Aside from being an inspiring event to discover innovative applications of European space technologies and an opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group of people with similar interests, the hackathon also has a competitive aspect.

All participating teams are challenged to deliver a compelling pitch of their idea and demonstrate the prototype they have built at the end of the hackathon weekend. Local organisers are responsible for checking the pitches and prototypes, evaluating them and selecting a local winner. **Local organisers are encouraged to offer a prize for the winning team and the runners-up.**

Each of the 10 local winners will pitch their solution at the demo day in the week following, competing in the European-level competition. Each local organiser will coach their winning team to deliver a compelling pitch. A professional selection committee will watch the pitches and evaluate each team. After careful deliberation, the selection committee will select the three overall winners. These winning teams **will receive 100 hours of mentoring organised by the central team over the six months following the hackathon and cash prizes of up to 9,000€ (1st: 5,000€, 2nd: 3,000€, 3rd: 1,000€)**. Local organisers have the option to provide a physical location for the local winner to pitch as a part of the virtual event or for other participants to follow the event, but it is not a requirement.

A scoring matrix will be defined to assist the local evaluators and the selection committee in selecting the winning teams. There will be an important focus on teams' commitment to move forward with their idea following the event. Teams winning the mentoring prize should be able to benefit from it and grow into a successful start-up.

Support for local organisers

The core team supports the local organisers in multiple ways.

Support package

Local organisers will receive a comprehensive **support package**. This includes a general expense budget of **EUR 24,000** intended for costs related to the organisation of the local hackathon, in addition to in-kind communication and promotion services and a technical support package provided by the core team.

General expense budget

Local organisers can use the general expense budget to cover the costs directly related to the organisation of the local hackathon, up to **24,000 euro (VAT exclusive)**.

Costs that could be paid from the budget include, but are not limited to:

- Venue, catering, etc.
- General ICT equipment
- Additional audio-visual equipment
- Preparation of extra datasets
- Fees for facilitators, experts, speakers
- Personnel costs for planning, preparation, and execution
- Prize(s) for the local winner(s)

Local organisers must indicate how they will spend this budget as part of their application. The budgeted costs must be realistic estimates of the true costs. The allocation of the budget is an important part of the application. Please note that local organisers will have to list their expenses and personnel costs and provide invoices/receipts as part of the reporting after the hackathon.

The **general expense budget** will be paid out to local organisers in **two instalments**. One-third of the budget will be paid out in advance **pending approval of the interim report**. The remaining two-thirds of the budget will be paid out **after the event has concluded and the final report is approved**.

Communication and promotion services

Local organisers will be provided with in-kind communication and promotion services by the core team. These services include help with a local marketing strategy and plan, paid advertising on social media, and the creation of local marketing collateral (graphic design, copywriting, translation, etc.).

Local organisers should demonstrate in their application how they wish to complement the central communication efforts with their own communication and promotion. It is also interesting to learn how they will leverage existing communication channels to spread the message of the CASSINI Hackathons and what the role of their partners can be.

Technical support package

The technical support package contains some basic audio-visual equipment to facilitate the connection with the central virtual hub **during the Hackathon Weekend**. The package will be shipped and delivered to the local organiser, who will be responsible for setting up and operating the equipment for the event. The contents of the package are meant to be used for activities related to the organisation of the local hackathon. The local organisers should send back the contents after the hackathon.

Additional resources

Local organisers can also benefit from additional resources to run the hackathon.

Website & brand kit

All common information for participants (such as the challenges, on-demand training, the hackathon toolkit, etc.) will be hosted on the CASSINI website (https://www.cassini.eu/hackathons/). The website is also the gateway to the central registration process. In addition, each local organiser has a dedicated section on the website containing information about their hackathon location (such as the local agenda, practicalities, experts, sponsors, prizes, etc.). The website is managed and updated by the core team, based on the local content provided by the local organisers.

Next to the website, the core team provides local organisers with access to a managed mailing platform for mass communications to registered participants in a GDPR-proof way.

You will also receive a brand kit with guidelines on the visual identity, branded templates, and some associated visuals. This enables you to apply the visual identity across all material developed for the hackathon. The visual identity and core messages should be respected in all external communication for the hackathon location.

Platforms & tools

You will receive access to a common hackathon and event platform that will be set up for the whole hackathon. The platform will be available for the duration of the event. It will include functionalities like registration, team formation and project submission. In addition, the platform will be able to host a live stream, organise virtual sessions and facilitate questions and answers.

In addition to the virtual event platform, a chat environment will be set up for the whole hackathon community. The chat environment will be available from the launch of promotion activities. Local organisers will have administrative rights when possible. This enables them to reach their participants easily before, during and after the event. Also, participants can chat with each other, within teams and across teams.

Hackathon resources

Local organisers will receive a set of hackathon resources that includes a blueprint of the event, a playbook for participants, canvasses, an evaluation matrix and much more.

Challenges & datasets

The challenges will be defined for the whole hackathon. Local organisers will receive background information and presentation material about the theme and its challenges.

For working with Earth observation data, a prepared data cube based on Copernicus data and information will be provided. This will enable participants to have a head start and not spend unnecessary time on data preparation. This dataset will be limited in geographical and temporal scope. Of course, local organisers are also encouraged to complement this dataset with their own locally relevant (space or in-situ) datasets, or datasets provided by partners, if these fit into the defined challenges.

Cloud infrastructure

To deliver the data cube and allow participants to perform cloud processing, participants will be provided with access to a DIAS platform (https://www.copernicus.eu/en/access-data/dias). For each edition of the CASSINI Hackathons we work with one DIAS provider. This provider will ensure training in advance of the hackathon and support during the hackathon. An expert will be available during the hackathon as well to assist teams with troubleshooting.

IoT and satellite connectivity

We will offer a cloud-based IoT maker platform that allows for rapid prototyping of sensor-based solutions. We'll provide participants with GNSS receivers equipped with built-in satcom capabilities, enabling seamless data transmission. Furthermore, we'll supply Arduino open-source development kits, empowering hackathon participants to explore the creative potential of satellite-connected IoT devices and develop innovative applications.

Community of experts

A community of experts will be available online to help teams on a one-on-one basis. These are experts in fields related to space technology, the theme, and innovation methodologies.

Local organisers are also encouraged to provide experts to help participants in the hackathon. These can be experts in the challenge-matter, space technologies, emerging digital technologies or business and entrepreneurship.

Local organisers can determine how many experts are needed based on the number of participants and the type of support provided to participants. We think it is good for a hackathon location to **have 5 to 10 experts to support the participants.**

Code repository

A common code repository will be provided, where sample code from previous participants can upload their code as open source.

Other topics

Local languages

The main language of the CASSINI Hackathon will be English. Local organisers can facilitate the local hackathon and provide workshops and training in one or more local languages. However, the main communication and the **interactions with the central virtual hub must be in English**. The project summaries, prototypes, and pitch presentations that the teams submit must be in English as well.

Reporting

Local organisers are required to provide an **interim report and a final report** on their activities and results.

The interim progress report is a forward-looking report that will be due two months before the hackathon and should contain the following:

A. A summary of your planning efforts and an overview of your activities until the end of the hackathon edition.

B. The updated information about partners/sponsors, actions in the big ideas campaign, local hackathon programme, etc…

This information should be on the website too.

The final report is a backward-looking report that should be delivered within two weeks after the hackathon. The report should contain an overview of all activities, the impact of the action and a listing of the expenses and personnel costs that are covered by the general expense budget. The report should also contain the invoices/receipts for the expenses.

Data protection compliance

The CASSINI Hackathons & Mentoring is a programme of the European Union, managed by the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA). This means stricter data protection regulations apply than those you have to follow as a private company, in particular regulation (EU) 2018/1725. These regulations need to be followed by contractors and subcontractors as well. As a direct impact of this, the channels that you have available to communicate with hackathon participants will be managed by the core team. Due to consent management, local organisers can contact participants only via the mailing platform (MailerLite) for mass mailings, or through the hackathon platform for individual messages. **Direct contact with participants via email will not be possible.**

Frequently asked questions

Will the event be hybrid or physical?

All local hackathons will take place physically and will connect to the virtual hub remotely.
Local organisers can choose whether to accept remote participants or not.

Can we organise a local hackathon with a consortium?

![CASSINI #EUSpace Hackathons & Mentoring logo]

Yes. It is good practice to involve all partners closely with the organisation of the local hackathon for the best result. However, only one partner will be responsible for the local hackathon. This partner will be the main point of contact and the recipient of the support package.

Can a natural person organise a local hackathon?

Local organisers must be a legal entity, which means either a natural person, a private company, or a public law body. So yes, a natural person can in principle apply. Obviously, the natural person would need to have a VAT number. Like all applicants, they will also need to demonstrate the organisational capability to organise a local hackathon.

Which costs can be paid from the general expense budget?

All costs directly related to the organisation of the local hackathon are eligible. Personnel costs and costs of freelancers can also be paid from the budget.

Should we include VAT in the budget?

No. The budget should contain the estimated costs without VAT. Please note that the general expense budget of 24,000 euros is VAT-exclusive.

Is co-funding from other sources required?

No. You can choose to self-fund the costs that are not covered by the support package. It is also possible to work with partners that contribute in-kind or cash. It is highly recommended at least to have in-kind sponsors. Please indicate other sources of funding in your application and budget.

How much co-funding can we accept?

We do not impose a limit. However, the local hackathon must remain true to the concept and requirements explained in this application guide.

Do I need to look for sponsors?

No. However, it is highly recommended to work at least with in-kind sponsors.

Who are the ideal participants?

Participants can be students, professionals from industry or from academia, people working for governments, non-profits, etc. Keep in mind that the goal is to attract committed participants and build new teams around ideas that have the potential to last well beyond the hackathon.

How old should participants be?

Participants must be 18 years old. It is up to the local organiser to determine what the most interesting target groups are.

Is the hackathon intended for established start-ups only?

Not at all. The hackathon is intended for a much broader audience. In fact, the hackathon is intended to form new teams. Nevertheless, individuals who know each other (colleagues, friends, …) can form teams after registration.

Can we accept participants from multiple countries?

Yes. Participants residing in any country of the European Union can participate in any of the local hackathons. Participants residing in a non-EU country associated with Horizon Europe (or in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement where the agreement applies before the award) where a hackathon is organised can participate in their own country.

Can we accept participants from all over the world?

No. Only people with residence in the EU27 or in the non-EU country associated with Horizon Europe (or in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement where the agreement applies before the award) where a hackathon is taking place can participate. People from other countries cannot participate, even remotely.

Can we target participants from multiple countries?

Yes. As there are only 10 locations per hackathon, there will be many potential participants without a hackathon in their country. You can reach out to those in neighbouring countries eligible for participation to invite them.

How many participants and teams should a local hackathon have?

Local organisers can determine how many participants they will host based on their capabilities. We think it is good for a hackathon location to have 50 active participants in 10 to 12 teams.

Do I need to set up dedicated social media channels for the local hackathon?

No. You should not set up new social media channels. Instead use your existing channels and make use of the official hashtags.

Will the hackathon weekend programme be set for the whole hackathon?

Partly. The hackathon programme will contain several interaction moments with all participants, through the central virtual hub. We will also provide guidelines on how to structure the hackathon. The local organisers have the freedom to shape the rest of the programme with hacking, coaching, workshops, training, presentations, or other activities.

How many experts do we need to provide?

It is up to the local organiser to determine how many experts are needed. However, we recommend having at least 5 experts with diverse skills and expertise.

What type of experts do we need to provide?

All expertise that can help teams in a hackathon is welcome. It is possible to involve experts related to Earth observation and satellite navigation, experts in emerging digital technologies, experts about the theme and the challenges or experts in innovation methodologies. Other routes to take are to involve potential customers or very early-stage investors to provide feedback to the teams on their ideas.

Can I use my own data access platform?

The DIAS platform used for a specific hackathon is where the official data cube will be hosted. If you would like to work with another data access platform or another provider for additional services, please reach out to us to discuss your specific needs.

Will there be training before the hackathon to get familiar with the platform?

There will be online training providing guidance on how to use the DIAS platform available for participants. A dedicated section of the participant playbook will also support these activities.

Are there other prizes than mentoring?

Yes, the top three teams will receive cash prizes of up to 9,000€ (1st: 5,000€, 2nd: 3,000€, 3rd: 1,000€) besides mentoring. Local organisers are encouraged to provide additional prizes for local winners. This prize can be sponsored for example.

Who will do the mentoring of the winning teams?

The core team will set up and manage the mentoring programme for the winning teams. We have a pool of mentors but an open call for mentors will also take place for each hackathon round.

Can we organise a local hackathon at another date?

No. Local hackathons are an integral part of a large Europe-wide hackathon. Therefore, all local hackathons will happen simultaneously.

Contact us

For more information or any questions about the open call for local organisers, send us an email at hello@hackathons.cassini.eu.