

Twinnings in DigitalHealthEurope

10.03.2020

This document is prepared for the members of the European 1+ Million Genomes Initiative. It introduces key aspects of the DigitalHealthEurope twinning scheme, which is funding twinnings to support key European Commission (EC) priorities for enabling the digital transformation of health and care¹.

1 What are twinnings

Twinnings are a mechanism for **transferring innovative solutions** from one region or country to another. The approach has been successfully applied in a number of EU projects and studies, including the ScaleAHA study², which funded 20 twinnings.

The region/country with the innovative practice is called **originator**, and the implementing region/country is the **adopter**. In some cases, an external facilitator may be needed.

Twinning activities may include, for example, hosting meetings, technical groups, travelling, acquiring licenses, paying fees for professional services, etc. Twinnings typically last up to one year.

2 Expected twinning solutions

The digital innovative solutions that can be funded via DigitalHealthEurope twinnings must be related to one or more of the three priorities defined in the EC Communication, namely:

- ▶ Citizens' secure access to and sharing of health data across borders
- ▶ Better data to advance research, disease prevention and personalised health and care
- ▶ Digital tools for citizen empowerment and person-centred care.

Applicants for twinning must specify the twinning solution(s) they are addressing under these three overall priorities.

Twinning solutions are the **digital know-how** which is transferred through the twinning activities to the adopter region(s). They may be products, services, processes, methodologies, strategies and/or business models. The solutions must make use of digital technologies. They must be innovative³, i.e. they will not have been used in the adopting region(s) before the twinning takes place.

The following non-exhaustive list serves to provide guidance to applicants on what topics the proposed twinnings are expected to address, **with examples related to the second priority**, as it is expected to be of most interest for members of the European 1+ Million Genomes

¹ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on enabling the digital transformation of health and care in the Digital Single Market; empowering citizens and building a healthier society COM(2018) 233 final, Brussels, 25.04.2018. https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/ehealth/docs/com2018_233_en.pdf

² <http://www.scale-aha.eu/home.html>

³ Innovation here is used to refer to a product, service, process, methodology, strategy, business model as described in https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation_en. For the novelty aspect of innovations, please refer to the definition here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Innovation>

Initiative. The list does not preclude submission of twinnings relating to other topics linked to the three priorities.

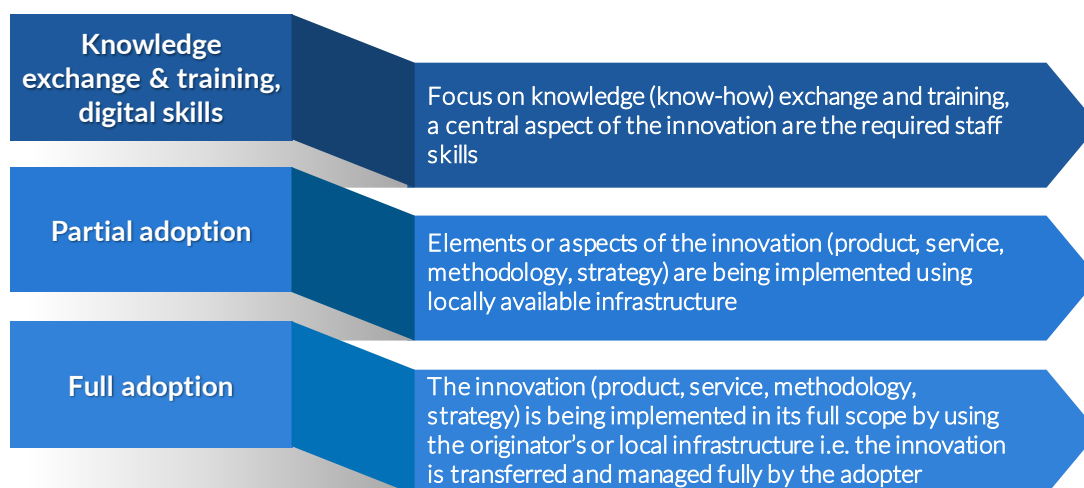
List of example twinning solutions relating to the second priority of the Communication

- ▶ ICT infrastructure for personalised medicine, -omics databanks
- ▶ Biomedical infrastructures
- ▶ National/regional genomics strategy (incl. digital genomics)
- ▶ Whole genome sequencing
- ▶ Interoperable disease registries
- ▶ Use of real-world data (RWD)
- ▶ Health data analytics (Artificial Intelligence, algorithm development and calibration, machine learning, risk stratification tools, etc.)
- ▶ Big data analysis, particularly for preventive medicine
- ▶ ICT supported Population Health management
- ▶ Interoperability of disease registries including for rare diseases
- ▶ Health data donation, public preference models on data use for research
- ▶ Health data cooperatives
- ▶ Digital tools for public health, epidemiology, pharmacovigilance
- ▶ Population wide screening and case finding
- ▶ Reuse of EHRs for clinical research
- ▶ Other: please specify

3 Twinning types

Twinnings can be grouped into **three types**. They range from knowledge exchange to adoption (whether partial or full) of the transferred solution. The different twinning types require different forms of funding, have different deployment time frames and need different experts.

- ▶ **Knowledge exchange and training:** This type of twinning mainly targets local authorities which do not have much experience with EU networking but are eager to learn from experiences in other parts of Europe. The twinning is seen as a first step to discuss a concrete solution (product, service, methodology) and how it can be transferred to the adopting region(s). The capacity needed is built during the twinnings. This includes identification of appropriate staff, setting up a process roadmap, defining expected outcomes, etc.
- ▶ **Partial adoption:** Twinnings that undertake partial adoption of a digital solution will have to provide concrete evidence on impact of the adoption, as well as the reasons why a full adoption is not possible (e.g. different healthcare systems, organisational differences, reimbursement issues, etc.).
- ▶ **Full adoption:** This type of twinning mainly targets local authorities with well established relations with other authorities in Europe (e.g. through memorandums of understanding, past EU project partnerships, etc.), that have already planned collaboration on a specific topic/solution and have made first steps, such as adaptation. The twinning aims to achieve a full adoption of the solution in the adopting region(s) using local infrastructure (including adaptation) or the Twinning Originator's infrastructure.



Twinning types in DigitalHealthEurope

4 Funding budget and budget distribution

The total budget for the twinning scheme is €399,000. Twinning contracts will be awarded based on available budget, i.e. contracts will be awarded until the remaining budget is insufficient to fund the next best twinning tender that has passed the evaluation threshold. The exact number of twinings finally awarded will thus depend on the prices offered and the number of twinning tenders passing the evaluation.

The maximum allowed budgets for each twinning type are specified in the table below.

DigitalHealthEurope Call for Twinning Tenders funding framework

Twinning type	Expected no. of twinings	Maximum cost of one twinning for all three cost categories	Maximum for the category of Twinning Subcontracting
Knowledge exchange & training, digital skills	13	€5,000	0
Partial adoption	7	€17,000	€12,000
Full adoption	5	€43,000	€22,500

5 Twinning scheme time schedule

The table below presents the planned twinning scheme time schedule.

Twinning scheme time schedule

Date	Activity
26.02.2020	Publication of the Call for Twinning Tenders documents on digitalhealtheuropa.eu
12.03.2020	Webinar 1 for tenderers (expected date)
08.04.2020	Webinar 2 for tenderers (expected date)
10.04.2020	Deadline for questions by tenderers

04.05.2020	Deadline for submission of twinning tenders
22.05.2020	Award decision and notification
June 2020	Twinning Contracting
01.07.2020	Start of twinning activities for all twinning types (= M1)
31.12.2020	End of twinning activities for “Knowledge exchange and training”
28.02.2021	End of twinning activities for “Partial adoption”
30.04.2021	End of twinning activities for “Full adoption”

6 Application information

The focus of twinning is on local, regional and national health and care providers in Europe that wish to adopt innovative solutions which are available for transfer from another local, regional and national health and care provider in Europe.

Twinning activities must involve the transfer of digital know-how to at least one Twinning Adopter region from another region or organisation (Twinning Originator). Twinning Originator and Twinning Adopter(s) must be from different countries.

An organisation may participate in more than one twinning tender, so long as the twinning solutions and the twinning activities are both significantly different.

The twinning tender must include a detailed financial offer broken down to binding prices declared in one of three categories: personnel, other direct costs and subcontracting. Details are provided in the following:

- ▶ Details for personnel
- ▶ Details for other direct costs
- ▶ Details for subcontracts / fixed costs

Application templates are provided with the call to support the application process.

A twinning tender must be submitted by a single organisation willing to become Twinning Contractor. A Twinning Contractor can be a Twinning Originator, a Twinning Adopter region or a Third Party. Successful tenderers will be offered a Twinning Contract by the Acting Procurer⁴. The Twinning Contract sets conditions for the entire duration of the twinning.

7 Further details and contact information

More details about the twinings at <https://digitalhealtheurope.eu/twinning/call2.html>

Contact DigitalHealthEurope project at <https://digitalhealtheurope.eu/contact.html>

Subscribe to get an email as soon as the Twinning Scheme is online at <https://digitalhealtheurope.eu/participate.html>

⁴ Acting Procurer is empirica Gesellschaft für Kommunikations- und Technologieforschung mbH, co-ordinator of the DigitalHealthEurope project with Grant Agreement Nr. 826353