



PRESS

Joint Press Release

**By Digital Hub Logistics, VTT,
Friuli Innovazione, Endeve, MEST,
Prototipi, and BongoHive**

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DIGILOGIC: The first pan European and African Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) focusing on smart logistics

- DIGILOGIC is a project launched in January 2021, with funding support from the European Commission (EC)
- DIGILOGIC creates a network of Digital Innovation Hubs in the EU and Africa, focusing on smart logistics
- DIGILOGIC enables the growth of a common innovators' ecosystem, where talents from both Europe and Africa will benefit from access to technology, knowledge and ultimately market opportunities and investments

The EC has granted EUR 1.9 million to DIGILOGIC, a three-year Horizon 2020 project to boost cooperation and long-term, sustainable partnerships between European and African Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs), paving the way for innovators, startups, and SMEs to jointly develop smart logistics solutions in close cooperation with industries and investors.

The DIGILOGIC project is deployed by a consortium comprising three DIHs in Europe - Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund (Germany), VTT (Finland) and Friuli Innovazione (Italy); two DIHs in Africa - MEST (Ghana) and BongoHive (Zambia); the system change facilitator Endeve (Germany) and an SME Prototipi (Nigeria).

Together, these partners will foster the adoption of emerging technologies such as Cloud Computing, Big Data, Augmented and Virtual Reality, Machine Learning, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Smart Devices, Internet of Things (IoT) and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for smart logistics solutions, through the deployment of a dynamic and impactful knowledge transfer process and a targeted implementation programme across Europe and Africa.

Digital Innovation Hubs

Digital Innovation Hubs are the organisations that DIGILOGIC will use to foster the adoption of emerging technologies for innovative solutions, products and services. They create the conditions for - and subsequently nurture, support and promote - innovation, especially by SMEs, young innovators, startups and mid-caps. They provide access to technology-testing, skills development, financing advice, knowledge sharing, collaborative projects, brokerage, market intelligence and networking opportunities. It is worth noticing that the EC is facilitating the creation of networks of DIHs which can



share nodes/technologies platforms, as well as hard and soft competencies to cope effectively with the EU's digital transformation across all aspects of the economy. In Africa, there is an increased commitment to coordinate efforts across ecosystems that has led to the establishment of several regional and continental networks of hubs: a recent report by Briter Bridges and the GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator Programme maps over 600 tech hubs on the continent, joining forces in around 15 networks.

DIGILOGIC acts as an ecosystem of ecosystems, mapping the existing players, leveraging on DIHs' competencies and network and analysing the levers of change which should be addressed to exploit innovation, facilitate collaboration and ultimately create market and uptake opportunities for innovators, SMEs and start-ups in smart logistics from both continents.

DIGILOGIC Smart Logistics Technology Radar

DIGILOGIC partners see the horizontally connecting logistics industry at the converging point of interest and priorities for digital innovation for social and business development; a crucial node for Europe's and Africa's sustainable prosperity. The logistics sector is facing a plethora of challenges, both from competitors as well as disruptors. It is therefore a sector that cannot afford to not keep innovating, to secure a free and independent logistics industry. Logistics is much more than transport and linking horizontally various elements of today's economies. Thus, logistics and global supply chain management secure manufacturing, trade and by this the competitiveness of economies.

The innovation uptake by applying ICT and other digital technologies to logistics will have a knock-on effect of benefiting other industries (from agriculture to manufacturing, from local trade to e-commerce, from health care to mining) and will provide substantial support to both macro- (e.g. large scale freight movements by air, sea and land, added-value services like warehousing, assembling among others) and micro-/ small- businesses growth in areas such as "last-mile" deliveries. Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is showing the essential role played by logistics in sustaining the functioning of our societies and delivering vaccines, and emergency supplies, while revealing the fragile nodes of global supply chains. Technology is helping our societies to remain connected at the time of social distancing and e-commerce stepped in significantly in our daily lives. Now, more than ever, data, knowledge and competencies sharing are the combustible for innovation and recovery: "There is no time to lose and nobody can afford to be isolated".

DIGILOGIC is working on a smart logistics technology radar, including the latest technical developments and industry needs, with a *deep dive* into specific European and African challenges and available solutions, to guide the mentoring and go-to-market learning programme.

DIGILOGIC go-to-market focus eLearning

In June 2021, DIGILOGIC will launch an interactive eLearning platform with on-demand and live business, design thinking and smart logistics ICT modules. The eLearning platform will be free of charge and accessible at any time with on-demand and live webinars, documentation, dedicated thematic course, exercises and assignments to enable learners to follow their learning path as per their needs, motivation and time availability. Through the same platform, smart logistics experts will offer group and individual mentoring to innovators. Last but not least, the DIGILOGIC eLearning platform will also represent the place for peer-to-peer learning, where innovators can network and find the right partners to develop their proposals to DIGILOGIC's so-called *Challenges*.



DIGILOGIC Challenges for European and African innovators

In May 2022, DIGILOGIC will launch opportunities for innovators in Europe and Africa to solve four challenges related to the improvement of logistics on both continents. DIGILOGIC will define the topics of the four challenges, based on the real needs and *pain points* of SMEs, industries, and local governments. There will be opportunities to solve challenges ranging from logistics needs arising from ports to distribution centres, from transport organisations or local governments, solving bottlenecks at cross-border processes or last-mile delivery, at the warehousing stage or distribution level.

Applicants will be invited to propose effective emerging technologies solutions (such as IoT, AR/VR, AI, blockchain, etc.), effective deployment, demonstrate a combination of ICT and business skills and show the successful cooperation of innovators from Europe and Africa. The selected proposals (up to 12) will be offered a one-year mentoring and coaching programme which will kick off with a three-day Bootcamp in Europe and continue with ongoing virtual and physical mentoring and access to technology infrastructures made available by each DIH. The best projects will be part of DIGILOGIC's final Demo Day, co-located with a major innovation event in Europe or Africa.

DIGILOGIC Partners

With the innovation ecosystem of logistics and digital technologies that has grown over the decades at the Dortmund location, the Digital Hub Logistics is predestined to contribute its expertise to the DIGILOGIC project. Logistics is more than transport and horizontally links various elements of value chains and thus entire economies. Logistics based on smart digital technologies secure production, manufacturing and trade and thus future competitiveness. "says **Thorsten Hülsmann, Managing Director of [EffizienzCluster Management GmbH](#)** about future challenges of the DIGILOGIC project.

"It's in our DNA to promote innovation in West Africa, partnering with local Digital Innovation Hubs and educational institutions to communicate and promote digital entrepreneurship, local innovation and educational programmes. We're proud of leading the communication and marketing activities of DIGILOGIC, bridging European and African innovators for smart logistics solutions which can make an impact in the region." says **Adriano Mauro, Managing Director of [Prototipi Nigeria](#)**, an SME based in Lagos.

"With a goal of equipping the continent's most promising tech entrepreneurs with the skills required to launch and scale globally successful software companies in the past decade MEST is extremely proud to associate in the DIGILOGIC, project along with our partners paving the way for European and African innovators, startups, and SMEs to jointly develop smart logistics solutions in close cooperation with industries and investors. MEST is proud to lead the Ecosystem engagement activities and to execute Inclusive Digital and Entrepreneurship capacity building programs for unemployed youth and vulnerable groups." says **Prasanth Kumar- Director-Consultancy at [MEST](#)**, Entrepreneurship Support Organization based in Ghana.

"With a decade's worth of experience supporting the growth of the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem in Southern Africa, we are excited about the opportunity to extend our work in the Smart Logistics space together with European and African partners on the DIGILOGIC project. We are also very proud to be leading the creation of the eLearning platform that will extend the work of this project online especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.", says **Lukonga Lindunda, Executive Director at [BongoHive](#)**, an Entrepreneurship Support Organisation based in Lusaka, Zambia.

"Endeva is excited to be part of the DIGILOGIC project and to ensure that its smart logistics solution will improve the overall transport system in Africa. As system facilitators, we strive to understand



blockages and leverage points of system. As facilitators of co-creation processes, we support the design of impactful solutions.” **Claudia Knobloch, General Manager at [Endeva e.V.](#), based in Berlin, Germany.**

"We are proud to participate in Digilogic Project and be a part of the network between European and African DIHs that will stimulate the development of new solutions for modern logistics and responsive to the needs of the territories involved – says **Filippo Bianco, Managing Director of [Friuli Innovazione](#)** - With our 20 years of experience we will contribute to the project with our competence in supporting business ideas and to intercept young talents”.

European Partners



African Partners



This press release and a press picture is available [here to view and download](#).

For more information on the DIGILOGIC project please see www.digilogic.africa

For media enquiries: info@digilogic.africa

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