

Scholarships cascade funding call

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| 1. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL | 2 |
| 2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS | 2 |
| 3. AWARD CRITERIA & SCORING | 2 |
| EDI scoring mechanism (6 to 10 points): | 2 |
| Award..... | 2 |
| 4. INCOMPATIBILITIES | 2 |
| 5. APPLICATION PROCESS | 2 |
| 6. LEGAL DISCLAIMER..... | 2 |

DIGITAL4BUSINESS project- Scholarships for the Joint European Master’s in Advanced Digital Technologies for Business

General Information: DIGITAL-2021-SKILLS-01

Project acronym: D4B

Full name of the EU funded project: DIGITAL4BUSINESS

Grant agreement number:

Topic DIGITAL-2021-SKILLS-01SPECIALISED – Practical Application of Advanced Digital Skills within European Companies

Opening date: 1 May 2026

Deadline dates: 31 July 2026

Expected duration of participation: 2 academic semesters depending on the programme.

Total funding available: €200,000.00

1. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

As a major Digital Europe Programme project, Digital4Business has launched a *Joint Professional Master's in Advanced Digital Technologies for Business*. Accredited jointly at European level, the Master's is designed and delivered fully online by four leading European higher education institutions: National College of Ireland (IE), Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna (IT), Linköpings Universitet (SE), and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (PT) with close collaboration with industry partners.

With the kind support of the European Commission, the program is providing 100 scholarships to assist students from underrepresented, disadvantaged, or vulnerable groups. The Digital4Business consortium promotes inclusive access to advanced digital education by supporting individuals from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds.

Under Task 4.1 of the Grant Agreement, 100 scholarships will be offered for the September 2026 intake, targeting learners facing socioeconomic barriers, underrepresentation in STEM, or geographic disparities.

Alongside the free September 2026 intake, this scholarship scheme serves as a structured inclusion mechanism to ensure vulnerable groups are prioritised and supported.

Scholarships are awarded based on eligibility criteria and evaluation under the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework, rather than academic merit, ensuring fair access for those facing barriers in traditional admissions.

They also provide fully funded, industry-recognised certifications to enhance skills and employability in line with labour market needs.

Overall, the scheme supports diversity, reduces inequalities, and advances digital skills development across Europe.

The scholarships manager is the project coordinator, NCI (National College of Ireland).

Scholarships cascade funding call | NCI, Schuman Associates

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for the scholarship, applicants must:

- Meet the eligibility criteria as specified in the application form from the [Digital4Business](#) website.
- Meet the award criteria and scoring requirements as detailed in section 3.
- Comply with all requirements set out in this call document
- Submit all required documentation as specified in section 5.

3. AWARD CRITERIA & SCORING

The scholarships will be awarded to applicants based on the following criteria:

| Award criteria | Minimum pass score | Maximum score |
|---|--------------------|---------------|
| Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)* | 6 | 10 |
| Total | 6 | 10 |

**Includes indicators from three categories: socioeconomic status, underrepresented groups, and geographic diversity.*

Applicants must achieve a minimum score of 6 points to be considered.

EDI scoring mechanism (6 to 10 points):

EDI Indicators:

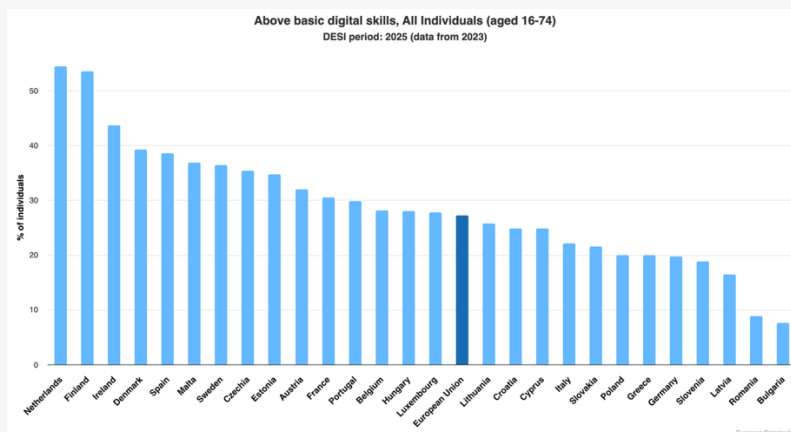
- **Socioeconomic status:**
 - unemployed individuals,
 - low-income students
 - students below the age of 25,
 - first-generation students (i.e., first in the family to attend tertiary or higher education).
- **Underrepresented groups:**
 - women, (in male dominated areas – Tech & STEM)
 - persons with disabilities¹

¹According to the definition of the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
Scholarships cascade funding call | NCI, Schuman Associates

- **Geographic diversity:** citizens of Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Slovakia, Greece, Germany, Slovenia, Latvia.

Geographic Diversity: Analytical Justification Report

In addition, [DESI data on above basic digital skills](#) show that a broader group of twelve EU countries—ranging from Lithuania to Bulgaria (Lithuania, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Slovakia, Poland, Greece, Germany, Slovenia, Latvia, Romania, and Bulgaria)—consistently perform below the EU average, forming the lowest-performing cluster in the Union. This highlights that digital skills gaps are not isolated but affect a wider regional group, with particularly low performance concentrated in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe.



Data Source: (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/isoc_sk_dskl_i21)

We are looking for applicants below average, represented on the right side (including Germany).

Applicants are assessed across all EDI indicators grouped under three categories: (1) socioeconomic status, (2) underrepresented groups, and (3) geographic diversity.

A minimum of two EDI indicators must be met to receive the minimum qualifying score (6 points). Each additional qualifying indicator earns one more point, up to a maximum of 10.

EDI Scoring Scale:

Scholarships cascade funding call | NCI, Schuman Associates

| Number of qualifying indicators | Points Awarded |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 2 indicators | 6 points |
| 3 indicators | 7 points |
| 4 indicators | 8 points |
| 5 indicators | 9 points |
| 6 or more indicators | 10 points |

Example: An unemployed woman from Romania meets 3 indicators and receives 7 points.

Award

Scholarships will **be allocated on a rolling basis until the available budget is exhausted**, following the **“first come, first served” principle** and under the conditions that a minimum pass score of 6 is obtained during the evaluation process.

4. INCOMPATIBILITIES

To comply with EU funding regulations, D4B students are not deemed eligible for any other EU funding as a result of participating in the courses.

Reporting Requirements: Any additional funding received must be declared in writing within 30 days, with confirmation that no cost duplication exists.

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants wishing to apply for a scholarship must agree to comply with the requirements, complete the scholarship application, and submit all required documentation via the application form on the Digital4Business website. All application steps are provided on the portal, and applicants are required to access it and follow the instructions. Alternatively, in the event of technical issues, applicants may contact admissions@digital4business.eu for assistance

Required Documentation for Scholarship Application: Candidates will be required to provide the following documentation:

- Application form

- Motivation statement
- Passport or national ID
- EDI required documentation:
 - o Medical certificate or official status proof – for persons with disabilities
 - o Signed self-declarations – for first-generation student.
 - o Proof of low-income (country official documents that prove the applicant receives public benefits or has been declared low income by a national authority – for e.g. certificate of social assistance, certificate of housing support, food vouchers, free school meals etc.) – for low-income applicants.
 - o Unemployment certificate or registration from a national agency – for unemployed applicants
 - o Academic transcript or proof indicating study/ work in STEM/Tech field – for Woman in male-dominated field (Tech/STEM).
- Other supporting documentation as appropriate to demonstrate eligibility.

The application form will explain these documentation requirements in more detail depending on your personal circumstances.

To apply for the scholarship please access the project website – [DIGITAL4BUSINESS](#)

6. LEGAL DISCLAIMER

This call (as well as **the financial support that will be provided through it**) is **NOT an EU action**. This call is launched solely by Digital4Business consortium (D4B). The financial support to the selected successful applicants will be provided directly by the Digital4Business consortium in its own name and under its own responsibility. D4B's own responsibility includes the preparation and drafting of this call as well as the selection of successful applicants that will receive the said financial support. The publication of this call in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal is made solely for information purposes with the aim to increase the visibility of this call to the general public, including to potential applicants (i.e. students). The said publication shall not be construed as direct or indirect approval of the content and conditions of this call by the relevant EU authorities or as any form of waiver from the above-described responsibility of D4B.

Selection Process: The D4B Consortium reserves the right to modify application deadlines, criteria, or processes as necessary. The Consortium is not obligated to award all available scholarships if insufficient qualified applications are received.

Data Protection: Personal data submitted will be processed in accordance with GDPR and solely for scholarship evaluation and administration purposes. Data will not be shared with third parties except as required for programme administration.

Limitation of Liability: The Consortium is not liable for any indirect damages, lost opportunities, or costs incurred during the application process.

Application Accuracy: Applicants are solely responsible for the accuracy and completeness of submitted information. False or misleading information may result in immediate disqualification and potential recovery of awarded funds.

Funding Availability: Scholarships are subject to available funding.

If you have questions relating to eligibility for the scholarship, please contact admissions@digital4business.eu.

