

Grant Agreement number: **825618**

Project acronym: **NGI_TRUST**

Project title: **Partnership for innovative technological solutions to ensure privacy and enhance trust for the human-centric Internet**

Type of action: Research and Innovation Actions (RIA)

Terms of Reference for an Impact Assessment of the
NGI_Trust portfolio of funded projects





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1 Introduction

The buyer

The NGI_Trust project aims to support the development of a human-centric Internet, by developing a stronger European ecosystem of researchers, innovators and technology developers in the field of privacy and trust enhancing technologies. The project is financed by the European Commission and coordinated by EFIS Centre, a not-for profit policy research centre and think tank located in Brussels. For the purposes of this procurement, EFIS Centre represent the project consortium and is considered as the Buyer.

For further information, please refer to:

NGI Trust website: <https://www.ngi.eu/ngi-projects/ngi-trust/> for information on NGI_Trust and third-party funded projects.

Background

The Next Generation Internet (NGI)¹ initiative aims to shape the future internet as an interoperable platform ecosystem that embodies the values that Europe holds dear: openness, inclusivity, transparency, privacy, cooperation, and protection of data. NGI_Trust focuses on security, privacy and surveillance aspects from different perspectives: at protocol level, seeking research and innovation ideas in this area that may lead to new business opportunities, as well as by exploring technical and political limitations that cause conflict amongst different parts of society (i.e. privacy versus security, authentication versus anonymity, etc.). As Europe has the most advanced privacy laws and regulations in the world, the NGI_Trust sought to explore how to use this aspect as a competitive advantage in software and hardware production, in data management services, etc.

The NGI_Trust project has four overall objectives:

- 1) Reinforce, structure and develop the community of researchers, innovators and technology developers in the field of privacy and trust enhancing technologies
- 2) Build on the state of the art in privacy and trust enhancing technologies by focusing support for third-party personal data, attributes and information
- 3) Improve user trust and acceptance of emerging technologies by focusing on applications and solutions that develop a more open, robust and dependable Internet and strengthen Internet Governance
- 4) Foster the exploitation and commercialisation of the results of selected third-party projects through a process of coaching and mentoring.

NGI_TRUST has run three rounds of open calls in order to select and provide financial support to the best projects submitted by third parties on a competitive

¹ See; <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/next-generation-internet> and the NGI website: www.ngi.eu



basis. More precisely, the projects funded were expected to contribute to developments in four identified areas:

- Better management of consent, to give more control to the user of their data when accessing and using services.
- Technical innovation in privacy enhancing technologies, such as cryptography, federated identity, security and privacy for IoT, privacy-enhancing data transports and data at rest.
- The application of artificial intelligence/machine learning/neural networks to serve the user's interests.
- Bootstrapping trust at the protocol level, to maintain a trustable Internet Infrastructure.

The scope of the funded projects was expected to involve the best Internet innovators in addressing technological opportunities arising from cross-links and advances in various research fields ranging from network infrastructures to platforms, from application domains to social innovation. NGI_Trust placed importance on projects that included validation and testing of solutions and services by involving users and market actors at an early stage. Ultimately, the projects results may influence Internet governance and related policies

From 300 proposal received, 57 projects were selected for funding and awarded a total of just over €5.6m euro. The projects are of three types: viability (up to €100,000 in funding), execution (up to €150,000 in funding covering up to two-thirds of the project budget) and transition to commercialisation (up to €200,000 in funding covering up to half the project budget). The projects have been grouped into 12 topics based on the issues addressed.

NGI TRUST **57 PROJECTS FUNDED**
12 THEMATIC AREAS

 BEYOND PASSWORDS	 BETTER PRIVACY	 SAFER BROWSING	 USER CONTROL	 IMPACT OF AI	 HUMAN-CENTRIC INTERNET
 STRONGER TOOLS	 EFFECTIVE IDENTITY	 PERSONAL DATA MANAGEMENT	 DATA ETHICS	 SECURING THE INTERNET OF THINGS	 ADVANCING IDENTITY

As well as funding, the NGI_Trust consortium is providing technical coaching, intellectual property and business mentoring support to the funded projects. NGI_Trust co-operates with other NGI projects to further support the exploitation of results including NGI_Tetra.



2 Procurement Purpose

The purpose of the assignment is to prepare an impact assessment (IA) of the 57 funded third-party projects drawing lessons from the implementation process and the results achieved to date (spring 2021) or foreseeable within the coming 18 months (end 2022).

The evidence and learning from the evaluation should also feed into and contribute ideas to a 'Future opportunities' report on priorities for privacy and trust enhancement technologies report under Horizon Europe that will be produced by the NGI_Trust consortium in October 2021.

The aim is to assess the technical, economic and societal impact of the portfolio of third-party projects with respect to the aims and targets set out by the NGI Trust project. The following specific issues and questions should be addressed:

- 1) To what extent has the portfolio of selected projects met the objectives of the NGI Trust project and thereby contribute to the European Commission's overall Next Generation Internet initiative goals?
- 2) To what extent are the funded projects, individually or based on a collective contribution to specific topics, likely to lead to an impact in terms of improving privacy and trust enhancing solutions for European internet users? This could be explored by identifying and characterising specific impacts (e.g. based on the potential application of results for users in education, research, social or public sectors, or in verticals such health, finance or automotive).
- 3) What lessons can be drawn for future NGI policy priorities and Horizon Europe funding and support measures (RIAs, CSAs, etc.), in the field of privacy and trust enhancing technologies?

Methodology

The Supplier is responsible for suggesting a methodological framework for the assessment. We welcome out of the box thinking and a participatory methodology. We would expect that, at a minimum, the supplier conducts:

- a limited number of scoping interviews with key NGI stakeholders at EU level; to place the NGI_Trust project in the broader NGI context;
- desk research, (group) interviews &/or a survey of third-party project participants to
- case studies of specific third-party projects or groups of projects.

NGI_Trust is organising a number of dedicated webinars enabling groups of projects to present their results and the chosen supplier will be invited to attend these webinars (held once a month since December 2020 – presentations from the first two are available on the NGI_Trust wiki).

The NGI_Trust consortium, represented by EFIS Centre, will make available a set of information and data on all funded projects to facilitate the supplier's work.



Deliverables

The work of the Supplier will be overseen by EFIS Centre in consultation with the NGI_Trust Management Board (the project partners). The Supplier will share draft reports and analysis with the Buyer during the process.

During the process, the Supplier shall submit the following reports in English:

- A methodological note with a detailed approach for the IA, including a detailed timetable (**within two weeks of the signature of the contract**).
- A draft report presenting findings, conclusions and recommendations, with a draft executive summary (**within four months of signing the contract**).
- A final report including a final executive summary (2 pages that can be used as a standalone policy brief) and a Powerpoint presentation (maximum 12 slides) presenting the IA results. (**no later than 30 September 2021**).

Project duration and process

We expect the contract to be signed by end March 2021

Based on the Suppliers proposal, the supplier and the Buyer will agree on the final process and deadline(s) for each deliverable. However, please note that the assignment must be finalised by end September 2021.

Team Profile

We are looking for a consultant or a consultancy team with previous experience in conducting impact assessments and policy analysis. The Supplier should have proven experience in relevant fields related to the European Commission's NGI policy (digital agenda, research and innovation policies) and an understanding of the concept of the Human Centric Internet and of innovation in the field of the Internet. We will expect candidates to have an understanding, without being experts, of open-source software policies.

3 Administrative Provisions

Tender Procedure

The Buyer plans to award the contract without having prior contact with the Suppliers, apart from possible requirements of small clarifications/corrections of the Tender specifications. However, negotiations may be organised if the Buyer deems it necessary after having received the Bids. It is to be noted that the Suppliers should hold no expectations of dialogue concerning their Bid and should therefore deliver their best Bid. The Buyer is free to choose none of the offers.

The Supplier is strongly encouraged to follow the instructions contained in this Tender Document and to pose any questions per e-mail to the contact person indicated below.



Selection Criteria

The Contract will be awarded to the Supplier who offers the most economically advantageous Tender based on the award criteria listed below:

- The quality of the methodology proposed and the planning for implementing the IA (50%)
- The competence of the designated team in the relevant fields for conducting the IA – breadth and depth and overall experience (20%)
- Value for money (30%).

As an indication of the budget, we estimate a workload of 40-50 expert days over the period April-September 2021.

Contact Details

Communication regarding this procurement shall be in written format and sent by e-mail to Alasdair Reid, NGI Trust Project Coordinator, reid@efiscentre.eu

Tender Documents

Proposals should be submitted in a Tender Document of up to 10 A4 pages. The Tender Document should be structured to address the issues mentioned in the procurement purpose. The Tender should be submitted as a single file in pdf-format and signed digitally by a person authorised to sign on behalf of the Supplier. If so wished, CV of the consultant (s) may be attached in a second PDF file.

The financial section of the proposal must include a detailed estimate of costs for the services rendered (based on daily fee rates per category of expert). Given the COVID-19 situation and the nature of the assignment, we expect all meetings and interviews to be conducted via web-conference. Should the Supplier be requested to attend a meeting in person (e.g. to present the results) the costs will be covered separately by the NGI_Trust coordinator.

Deadline and delivery

The Tender must be received by the Buyer no later than **19.03.2021 at 12:00 (CET)**.

The Tender shall be delivered by e-mail to reid@efiscentre.eu, and labelled with:

“NGI Trust Impact Assessment Offer – *name Supplier*”

The Tender deadline is absolute. Tender received after the Tender deadline will be rejected. The Supplier carries the risk of errors or delays in the submission/ sending of the Tender.