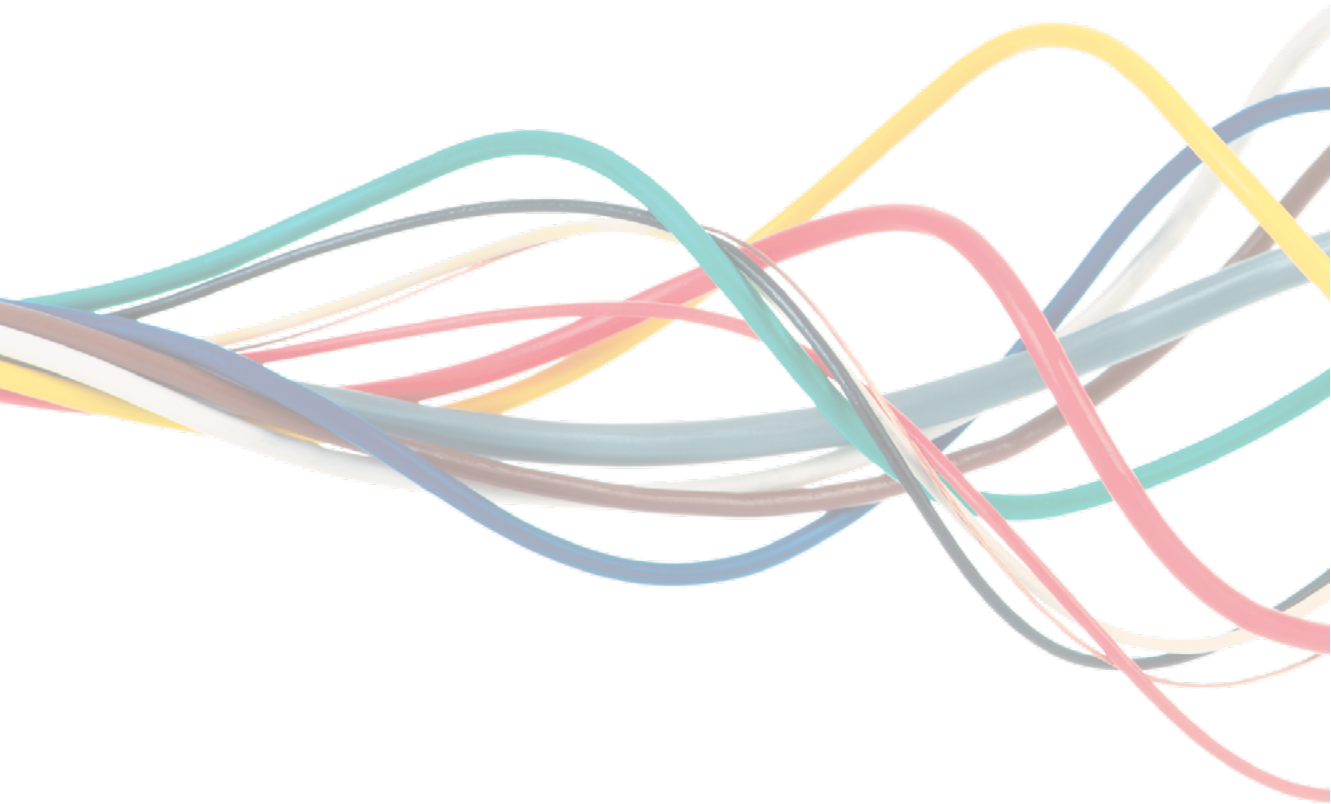


standICT.eu 2026

ICT Standardisation Observatory and Support Facility in Europe

Guidelines for Applicants to Fellowship

StandICT.eu Open Calls



About StandICT.eu

The project is coordinated by [Trust-IT Srl](#) (IT) acting as a technical coordinator, and [Dublin City University](#) (IE) acting as financial coordinator, supported by its partners [AUSTRALO](#) (ES), [European Digital SME Alliance](#) (BE), [Fraunhofer](#) (DE) and [Open Forum Europe](#) (BE).

■ Contents

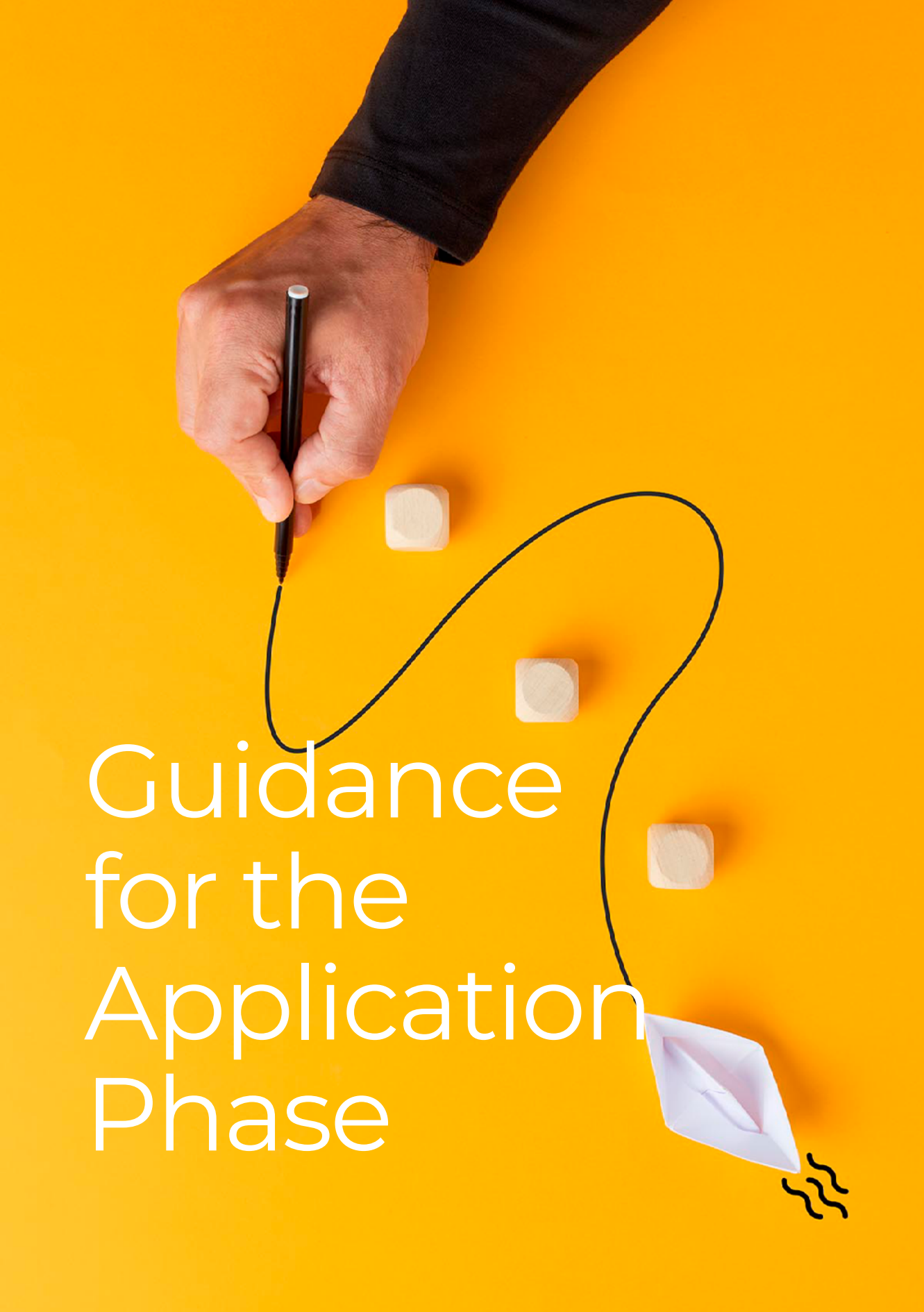
Introduction.....	4
Guidance for the Application Phase	5
1. Process and timing of Open Call for Applications	6
2. Criteria for receiving financial support	7
3. Type of contributions	8
4. Eligible costs.....	10
5. Criteria for evaluation	11
6. Open call topic priorities.....	12
7. How to apply	14
Guidance for the Funded Fellows.....	15
Financial aspects.....	16
Information about taxes related to the funding	17
Monitoring of the funded fellows	18
Dissemination of the funded fellowship and acknowledgement of funding	19
StandICT.eu 2026 Mentoring Programme.....	20

■ Introduction

This document provides the main guidelines for applicants who are interested in applying for StandICT.eu 2026 Open Calls.

In a series of nine open calls, running until June 2025, StandICT.eu will provide € 2,925,000 of direct funding to support the participation of European standardisation specialists in key international and global Standards Development Organisations (SDOs).

The objective of the funding is to enable the specialists to contribute to and help create a fully integrated European Standardisation Ecosystem, thereby strengthening Europe's position in global standardisation initiatives.



Guidance for the Application Phase

1. Process and timing of Open Call for Applications

StandICT.eu will run 9 Open Call cycles. Each call will be open for 60 days for proposal submission.

At the end of the sixty-day period all proposals received through [TRUST-GRANTS™](#) platform will be screened for eligibility, evaluated by an external pool of evaluators (EPE)¹, scored, and ranked for funding.

This process takes approximately 35 days, at the end of which all applicants shall be notified with the result of the evaluation process (e.g., retained fellowships or not successful application) and provided with access to a Consensus Report compiled by the EPE.

To guarantee maximum fairness and transparency, each application will be independently evaluated by three members of the EPE and will undergo quality control by a fourth member of the pool after consensus is reached.

As the EPE are highly-skilled experts whose qualifications are assessed through an open call process their decision is binding and any redress requests or complaints will be dealt with strictly in relation to the procedural aspects of the evaluation and not on the merits of scientific or technical judgement of the experts.

1 <https://www.standict.eu/call-evaluators-closed>

■ 2. Criteria for receiving financial support

Applicants to Open Calls must be **individuals or natural persons** residing in the European Member States and Associate Countries² from both public and private sectors, industry and service companies, including SMEs and start-ups, academia and research, and national and European associations, including NGOs representing consumer interests.

Potential applicants are standardisation specialists, defined as professionals with proven expertise and experience in standardisation activities e.g. previous contributions to standards developments, participation in various SDO groups, previous or current chairs etc in the respective priority area. Also, European ICT experts willing to start their contribution to the standardisation working groups and/or technical committees are eligible even if they do not dispose of previous proven experience. For these experts, StandICT.eu offers support with a dedicated mentorship programme (see reference to the related section: [Mentorship programme](#)).

Applications from standardisation first-timers who are willing to increase their knowledge and experience in ICT standardisation activities are also welcomed. In this case, while filling in the application applicants can subscribe to the standICT.eu 2026 [Mentorship Programme](#), that pairs new SME experts who are less familiar with the workings of SDO technical committees with seasoned fellows for guidance and advice.

Applicants can apply to all StandICT.eu Open Calls, and can be funded for a maximum of 60k€ over this current edition of StandICT.eu which will end on 31 December 2025. Applicants can also apply for a continuation of the previously funded activities, as long as they clearly demonstrate the progress made with respect to the previously funded application r, the improvements that will be performed in the new activities and the different timeline of the new activities - the latter criteria is very important in order to avoid the suspicion of double funding. In particular, it is crucial to note that **applicants who copy and paste the same (even successfully funded) applications may risk being penalised**. While we strive to guarantee continuity to our fellowships, it must be crystal clear that the new application is a continuation, highlighting the main new aspects it will address.

In case of not funded activities, applicants can re-apply to the next open call and adjust the application according to the comments and suggestions made by the evaluators.

In particular, the target of StandICT.eu open calls are European Experts who:

- ▶ have profound knowledge in one of the priority areas covered by the Open Calls;
- ▶ have experience regarding developments of standards, e.g., in SDOs, , in groups set-up by the EC, or when creating documentation in open source developments;
- ▶ are not receiving support from other instruments (PPPs, EU or national R&I projects) for the proposed activities, and are not being funded from other sources for an identical activity.

The most recent information listing participating countries in Horizon Europe issued by the Commission at the time of writing (25/07/2023) can be consulted here EU Grants: [List of participating countries \(HE\) V2.9 – 21.03.2024](#). Please refer to this document if you have any doubts as to your eligibility for funding.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

■ 3. Type of contributions

Applicants can request 3 different typologies of funding in under the StandICT.eu 2026 Open Calls, also shown in the table below.

Typology	Description	Max duration	Max funding range
Long term contribution (LT)	Contribution to ongoing standards development as a chair, convener, rapporteur or member of an SDO WG. E.g. comments on standards development and drafts, attending meetings also as an observer, paying membership fees.	6 months	10.000 €
Short term contribution (ST)	Contribution to standards documentation e.g. liaison to WG, comments on standards drafts, participation at meetings paying membership or registration fees.	3 months	5.000 €
One-shot	Support to ensure participation at workshop or event (e.g., participant, observer, presentation)	3 months	3.000 €

Both the maximum funding requested per proposal and the respective type of application (LT, ST, OS) cannot exceed that indicated.

■ 3.1 Fellowship timeline

It is important to note that the fellowship timeline needs to be aligned with the fellowship application; **the earliest possible start date of the fellowship is the application creation date on the Trust-Grants™ platform**. In this sense, **it is possible to set a start date for the fellowship that occurs before the announcement of the evaluation process results** are announced to the applicant. All fellowships have to respect the maximum duration of the contributions as defined in the table here above.

Important notice for the Open Call 9 applicants:

StandICT.eu 2026 Programme ends on 31st, December 2025, and no fellowship payments cannot be issued beyond that date. Also, given the administrative deadlines of the payments, **all Open Call 9 fellowships and final reports must be closed by 4th November 2025**. This will leave the necessary time for the StandICT.eu admin team to review and validate all final reports and process the remaining grant payments.

■ 4. Eligible costs

Applicants shall provide a clear, well-justified and detailed description of the eligible costs in their applications. These can include:

- ▷ Personal Working Effort (this cannot exceed the EU maximum daily rate of 450 Euro)
- ▷ Travel costs
- ▷ Event registration fee(s)
- ▷ Membership fee(s) for SDO & SSO organisations

Successful applicants will receive an email from Dublin City University, responsible for the financial management of StandICT'26, with instructions and the necessary paperwork. Further details about financial aspects can be found in '*Guidelines for the Funded Fellows*', in this document.

■ 5. Criteria for evaluation

The initial eligibility screening will be undertaken by the Consortium to assess compliance to the call. Proposals which are ineligible for any reason or which do not meet the call criteria will be identified as such, and the applicant will receive an automatic notification from the system.

The consortium will consolidate all eligible proposals and submit them to the external evaluators (selected from the External Pool of Evaluators – EPE) to undertake the formal evaluation.

For being considered eligible, each proposal will have to clearly demonstrate:

- ▷ Added value to existing SDO activities;
- ▷ Impact of work on European interests and the standard in question;
- ▷ Expertise of the applicant in the respective priority area;
- ▷ Expertise of the applicant in standardisation, e.g. previous contributions to standards developments, participation in other groups working on architectures, APIs, guidelines in the respective priority area.

Each proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the following four criteria principle:

- ▷ Criterion 1: Soundness of the proposal and foreseen impact on ICT Standardisation (30%);
- ▷ Criterion 2: Technical excellence & relevance of the activities proposed (30%);
- ▷ Criterion 3: Experience and qualifications of the applicant (20%);
- ▷ Criterion 4: Economics of the proposal (20%).

Scores will range from 1 to 10. The final scoring and ranking will be automatically determined by averaging the scores provided by the three independent members of the External Pool of Evaluators.

In the event of a tie between two or more proposals, where the allocated budget for a specific call does not allow funding for all, the proposal bearing the earliest time stamp of submission will be eligible for funding in the specific call.

■ 6. Open call topic priorities

The series of 9 Open Calls focus on the macro-areas of the key orientations of the Rolling Plan for ICT Standardisation³.

Applications that address any of the topics mentioned below taken from the Multi-Stakeholder Platform Rolling Plan for ICT Standardisation will be considered of equal validity and merit during the evaluation process.

▷ FOUNDATIONAL DRIVERS

- ▷ Data Economy
- ▷ Cybersecurity/Network and Information security
- ▷ E-Privacy

▷ KEY ENABLERS

- ▷ 5G and Beyond (6G)
- ▷ Cloud and Edge Computing
- ▷ Big Data & Open data
- ▷ IoT Internet of Things
- ▷ Electronic identification and trust services (including e-signature)
- ▷ E-infrastructure for data and computing intensive service
- ▷ Broadband infrastructure mapping
- ▷ Accessibility of ICT products and services
- ▷ Artificial Intelligence
- ▷ European Global Navigation Satellite Systems (EGNSS)
- ▷ Quantum Technologies

▷ SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

- ▷ E-Health, Healthy living and ageing
- ▷ Digital skills
- ▷ Digital learning
- ▷ E-Government
- ▷ E-call
- ▷ Pandemic Preparedness
- ▷ Safety, transparency and due process online
- ▷ Emergency communications and public warning systems

3 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/rolling-plan-ict-standardisation>

▷ INNOVATION FOR THE DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

- ▷ E-Procurement
- ▷ E-Invoicing
- ▷ Retail payments
- ▷ Preservation of digital cinema
- ▷ FinTech & RegTech Standardisation
- ▷ Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technologies
- ▷ Metaverse including Virtual Worlds

▷ SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- ▷ Smart Grids and Smart Metering
- ▷ Smart and Sustainable Cities
- ▷ ICT Environmental impact
- ▷ European Electronic Toll Service (EETS)
- ▷ Intelligent Transport Systems
- ▷ Digitisation of European Industry
- ▷ Robotics and autonomous systems
- ▷ Construction building information modelling
- ▷ Common information sharing environment (CISE) for the EU Maritime domain
- ▷ Water management digitalisation
- ▷ Single European Sky
- ▷ U-Space
- ▷ Circular Economy including Digital Product Passport

■ 7. How to apply

The platform is available here: [TRUST-GRANTS™](#). New applicants will have to first create a new account, and then once registered they can access the application form.

Applicants must then fill in the application form with the required information.

The application can also be saved into draft and modified anytime until the closing date of the open call.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute for submitting the final version of the application, in order to avoid eventual technical issues which may not submit the proposal on time.

Once the application has been successfully submitted, applicants will be notified with an email from notification@standict.eu.

Guidance for the Funded Fellows



■ Financial aspects

The **grant is a lump sum**, meaning that it does not require timesheets or justifications (e.g., invoices) for costs.

Applicants will receive an automatic email with an update on their payment status from TRUST-GRANTS™ platform. This email **is not to be considered an indicator of a deadline for payment**. Dublin City University (DCU) will follow up and start processing payments at the end of the fellowship based on the delivered and validated results as defined in the fellow's application form.

For fellows who request a prepayment, a valid justification linked to a milestone (for instance, the submission of the interim report) in addition to evidence of their early request (for instance, proof of travel expenses) must be provided to receive this prepayment

This payment process takes from 2 to 5 weeks to be completed. Subsequently, fellows will be informed that their payment will be transferred in the next 5 to 7 working days.

Applicants who supply their paperwork as a company (rather than as individuals) will be required to provide extra paperwork to register the company. This will mean that the payment for their grant will take longer to be received.

Information about taxes related to the funding

The financial contribution is a gross amount provided without deduction of any taxes or other duties which may be liable for payment in accordance with national tax regulations in your country of fiscal residence, should this count as income. Therefore, you should consult your local tax authority or accountant as to whether any taxes or other duties apply to the funding received. StandICT.eu 2026 cannot assume any liability, charge, responsibility or lien for paying any taxes or duties on the third-party funding provided, which lies solely with the fellow. In addition, any travel budget, generally not considered as income, which is not utilised due to Covid restrictions and possibly devolved to effort or another cost category may also become subject to taxation as a consequence, and StandICT.eu 2026 cannot assume any liability, charge, responsibility or lien related to its payment.

■ Monitoring of the funded fellows

The fellows perform all their reporting via [TRUST-GRANTS™](#), respecting the set deadlines. In this platform, the same profile and credentials are used as in the application phase. The funded fellow's dashboard has a dedicated section for drafting and submitting reports online. In addition, the StandICT.eu admin team offers continuous email support for all administrative issues related to the fellowship progress.

The reporting aims to understand the short-term impact of your fellowship contributions on the European ICT standards community, especially the European Commission and the Multi-Stakeholder Platform for ICT Standardisation, and to share your fellowship story with the StandICT.eu stakeholders:

- ▶ **For long-term fellowships**, the fellows are requested to submit 2 reports: an interim report (at M3) and a final report (at M6).
- ▶ **For short-term and one-short fellowships**, only the final report is required (at M3).

The templates of both reports follow the same structure: Section 1 gathers questions enabling to draft the profile of the funded expert and their background in ICT standardisation, Section 2 is dedicated to the funded fellowship activity, its tangible results and foreseen impact in the ICT standardisation arena.

Interim Report that LT fellows submit at their project M3 enables to track the mid-term progress of the fellowships monitoring, namely, the standardisation challenges and gaps, the addressed SDOs, WGs, and TCs, the number of meetings, webinars, and workshops participated in, and the overall progress compared to the initial work plan.

Final Report, submitted at the end of all funded fellowships (at M3 or M6 based on the fellowship type), contains questions notably regarding the achieved standardisation activities but also on the project's contribution to the new / revised standards and technical working groups, impact on SMEs, on the society as well as the final results of the activity.

Dissemination of the funded fellowship and acknowledgement of funding

Dissemination

The European Union funds the StandICT.eu 2026 project and its beneficiaries, so it is crucial to disseminate all achieved activities and obtain results related to the programme. This dissemination is done not only by the StandICT.eu project team but also by the funded fellows.

The funded fellows' work, and results are shared via different StandICT.eu channels, including:

- ▶ **Fellowship Open Call Impact Reports⁴**: Each open call batch has a dedicated publication gathering the key results of the fellows funded under the batch.
- ▶ **StandICT.eu Website**: The profiles of all funded fellows are published on a dedicated page⁵ of the project's website.
- ▶ **Social media: Fellows are asked to promote their funded contributions and activities on social media** (LinkedIn and X) by tagging StandICT.eu.
- ▶ **Success stories⁶**: All funded fellows can submit a success story presenting a standardisation activity that has been successfully finalised (these can be external to the StandICT.eu fellowship programme).

Acknowledgement of EU-funding

Even more importantly, the funded fellows must acknowledge the European funding, especially in any scientific or academic publications directly related to the funded activity.

4 <https://www.standict.eu/2026-impact-report>

5 <https://www.standict.eu/funded-fellows>

6 <https://www.standict.eu/success-stories>

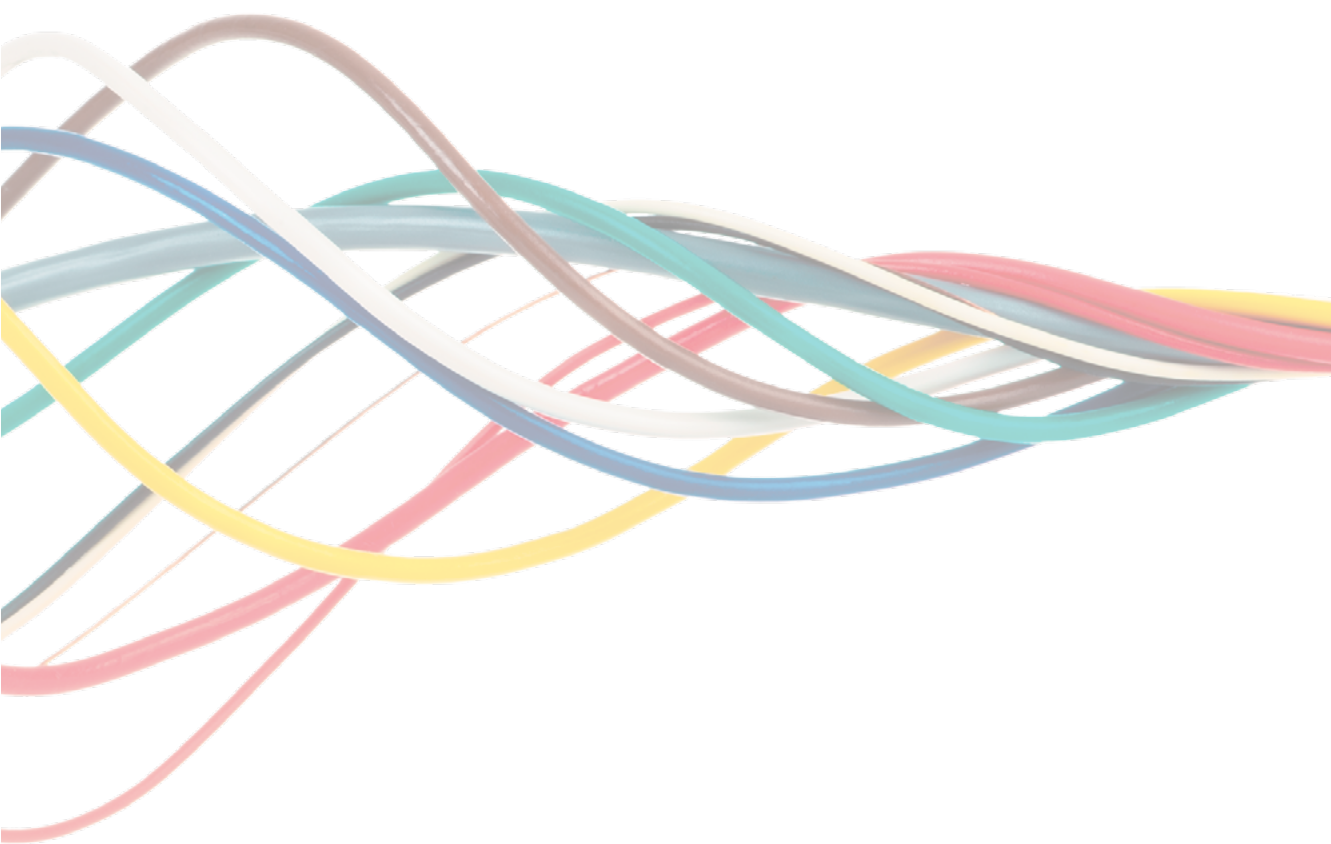
■ StandICT.eu 2026 Mentoring Programme

StandICT.eu has recently launched a mentorship programme, in order to accompany SME and other new coming fellows into the standardisation ecosystem.

More experienced experts (and notably returning StandICT.eu fellows) are given the possibility to be voluntarily put in contact with new fellows, matching their areas of expertise. This one-to-one mentorship programme aims to enable new coming fellows with less experience of the details of the work to carry out in SDO technical committees to benefit from tips and advice from more experienced fellows. This also gives the possibility to experienced standardisers to diffuse their knowledge to a new generation of European experts, and enable the European Union to maintain a strong standardisation knowledge base for the years ahead. The mentorship may come through any way the mentors see fit – whether through one-to-one exchanges, sharing of resources, or invitations to relevant meetings and conferences, where the mentee can get introduced to fellow peers.

A new question can now be found in the general application form, asking whether the applicant is interested in participating in this mentorship programme – either as a mentor, or as a mentee. The StandICT.eu team will then proceed to match the interested funded fellows from each new Open Call on the base of similar topics of expertise, and monitor the process. An information session will be organised after the results of each Open Call, in order to present the process in more details to the applicants.

If agreed upon by the participants, a success story displaying the fruitful process between the mentor and the mentee will further be displayed on the StandICT.eu website, giving additional credit and visibility to the participants which accepted to take time in participating in this programme.





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