NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2

April 2026 – September 2026

DEMOKRITOS · envOlve ENTREPRENEURSHIP · INFOLYSIS · UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA · A8 DEEP TECH FOUNDRY · ECLIPSE FOUNDATION · EurA · TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LIBEREC

Funded by the European Union

DeepTechSeeds has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe programme (HORIZON.4.2 – Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I System) under Grant Agreement No 101216535.

Type of action: HORIZON-CSA | Service: REA/C/04

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INTRODUCTION

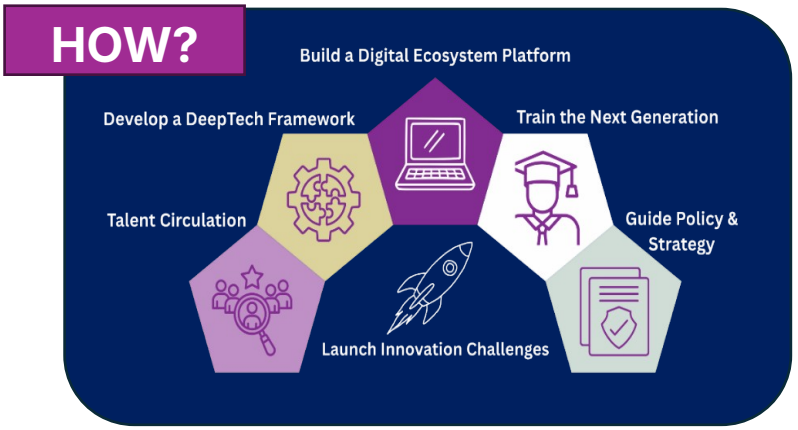
We are pleased to present the second newsletter of the DeepTechSeeds project (funded from HORIZON.4.2 - Reforming and enhancing the European R&I System), highlighting key activities and achievements from April to September 2026, the second six months of the project.

Launched in **October 2025**, DeepTechSeeds brings together a consortium of eight partners from six countries, combining diverse and complementary expertise and networks to build a strong and dynamic deep-tech talent ecosystem.

DeepTechSeeds tackles the urgent need for a highly skilled, adaptable workforce in Europe's deep-tech sectors. As global competition intensifies in areas like **AI, quantum computing, robotics,** and **advanced materials**, the project builds a dynamic ecosystem linking academia, industry, and the public sector.

It aims to reshape **early research careers** by introducing a framework based on the Charter for Researchers, supporting organizations in creating sustainable and attractive pathways for Early Career Researchers.

Ultimately, DeepTechSeeds fosters a new generation of researchers to strengthen Europe's leadership in deep tech and drive a more innovative, sustainable, and competitive landscape.



Events

DeepTechSeeds at OCX26

Building a European Talent Ecosystem for Early Career Researchers

On the 22nd of April 2026, DeepTechSeeds took part in the **Open Community Experience (OCX26)** in Brussels, where developers, architects, maintainers and open-source builders meet in real life. Our session, "A European Talent Ecosystem for Early Career Researchers", brought together representatives of the European Commission and **NCSR "Demokritos"** to discuss the European Research Area (ERA), the future of research careers and a more connected European talent ecosystem.

- **Mr. Dario Capezzuto**, Policy Officer, European Commission, opened the session by presenting the ERA and the efforts to strengthen research careers.
- **Dr. Stijn Delaure**, Project Officer, European Commission, spoke about Talent Ecosystems for the ERA and Europe's talent priorities.
- **Dr. Harilaos Koumaras**, Project Coordinator and Research Director, NCSR "Demokritos", presented the DeepTechSeeds Framework for nurturing, empowering and retaining early-career researchers.
- **Stefanos Plastras**, Deputy Project Coordinator and Research Associate, NCSR "Demokritos", introduced the newly established ERA Talent Ecosystem Working Groups.

The Horizon Europe **UNITY-6G** project was presented as an example of how the ERA Working Groups can support career paths for early-career researchers in open-source research and innovation.

You may read more about the session here.

When European initiatives come together, new opportunities emerge

IPCA visits the Technical University of Liberec

On the 27th of April 2026, the **Technical University of Liberec (TUL)** welcomed colleagues from the **Polytechnic University of Cávado and Ave (IPCA)** in Portugal, a fellow RUN-EU partner, for two days of discussions on research, innovation and the future of higher education.

TUL presented DeepTechSeeds and its evidence-based approach to developing deep-tech talent: identifying the competences future researchers need, and how universities can better support Early-Career Researchers. Together with the RUN-EU alliance, which gives its partners a network to share, test and develop ideas, the two initiatives open new opportunities to strengthen Europe's deep-tech talent ecosystem.

Many thanks to IPCA for the visit. We look forward to the ideas and collaborations that will grow from it.

DeepTechSeeds at the 61st NCSR "Demokritos" Summer School

On the 7th of July 2026, **Dr. Harilaos Koumaras** and **Stefanos Plastras** represented DeepTechSeeds at the **61st NCSR "Demokritos" Summer School**, in its DeepTech & Innovation thematic session. They presented the DeepTechSeeds toolbox, which gives early-career researchers tools, resources and opportunities to build their skills and drive innovation in deep tech.

The presentation drew strong interest from the audience: **more than 20 attendees** said they want to join the **DeepTechSeeds Platform**, a clear sign of the growing demand for programmes that support the next generation of deep-tech researchers.

A big thank you to NCSR "Demokritos" for the opportunity to engage with students and researchers.

A full auditorium for the DeepTechSeeds presentation at the 61st NCSR "Demokritos" Summer School

PLENARY

The 3rd Plenary Meeting

Valencia, 21–22 July 2026

The DeepTechSeeds consortium gathered in Valencia for its **3rd face-to-face Plenary Meeting** on the 21st and 22nd of July 2026. Over two full days of discussions and collaborative sessions, partners reviewed the progress achieved so far, shared ideas across the project's work areas and agreed on the next steps for the upcoming activities and shared objectives.

The meeting set the foundations for the months ahead, as the project moves from building its framework towards training, Virtual World Cafés and the Open Innovation Challenges.

A big thank you to all partners for their active participation and contributions.

The DeepTechSeeds consortium at the 3rd Plenary Meeting, Valencia, July 2026

Special thanks to the **Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV)** for hosting us.

White Paper

The ERA White Paper

The European Charter for Researchers in Modern Talent Ecosystems: Structural Gaps and Policy Pathways across the ERA

DeepTechSeeds, together with nine other **Horizon Europe WIDERA Talent Ecosystem projects**, developed a joint ERA White Paper on how the European Charter for Researchers works in practice across Europe's talent ecosystems. It brings together evidence from surveys, interviews, focus groups, institutional assessments and policy analyses carried out by the ten projects.

Key insights from the White Paper:

- **86%** believe the European Charter for Researchers increases the international visibility of research organisations
- **82%** believe it strengthens their attractiveness as employers and research partners
- **48.6%** of early-career researchers do not see a clear career path
- Only **22.9%** of early-career researchers have received any IP training

Policy pathways proposed:

- Clearer career pathways for researchers
- Stronger institutional support structures
- More intersectoral mobility between academia and industry
- Better intellectual property (IP) literacy
- Broader recognition of innovation-related achievements

You may read the full ERA White Paper here.

DeepTechSeeds at the REA Cluster Event on Sustainable Research Careers

In September 2026, the White Paper was presented and discussed at the **European Research Executive Agency (REA) Cluster Event** in Brussels, which brought together Horizon Europe Talent Ecosystem projects, policymakers, researchers and innovation stakeholders to discuss attractive and sustainable research careers in the ERA.

Dr. Harilaos Koumaras and **Stefanos Plastras** (NCSR "Demokritos") and **Christina Skoubridou** (Envolve Entrepreneurship) represented DeepTechSeeds, contributing to the discussions on talent ecosystems, researcher career development, matchmaking and innovation-oriented research pathways.

The main message: **attractive research careers require more than funding.** They need stronger links between researchers, universities, industry, innovation intermediaries and public authorities, which is exactly what DeepTechSeeds is building through its training, Virtual World Cafés, Open Innovation Challenges, talent matchmaking and policy actions for Early-Career Researchers in deep tech.

Moments from the REA Cluster Event "Talent Ecosystems: Building Sustainable Research Careers", Brussels

You may read more about the event here.

Coming Next

Open Innovation Challenges and Virtual World Cafés

Over the next two years, DeepTechSeeds will run **two Open Innovation Challenges**, in which companies bring real problems and teams of early-career researchers develop solutions together with mentors. The challenges are designed jointly by **INFOLYSIS** and **Acceler8**, which also runs them, with **Envolve** supporting the outreach.

The challenges respond directly to the gaps highlighted in the White Paper. Working on real company problems shows researchers what careers outside academia look like, builds innovation and business skills along the way, and connects them with people who can open doors.

What is planned:

- **Training** for early-career researchers starting at the end of November 2026, with career workshops running through 2027.
- **Three Virtual World Cafés**, each on one topic: AI Ethics (February 2027), AI Quantum Computing (October 2027) and a third, proposed on Advanced Materials (2028).
- **Matching events in Malta and Portugal**, bringing companies and researchers together.
- **The first Open Innovation Challenge** online in October 2027, and **the second** in spring 2028.

Our targets by the end of the project:

- At least **200** early-career researchers, with an aim of **45%** women
- **30** companies
- **2** Open Innovation Challenges
- **10** joint projects

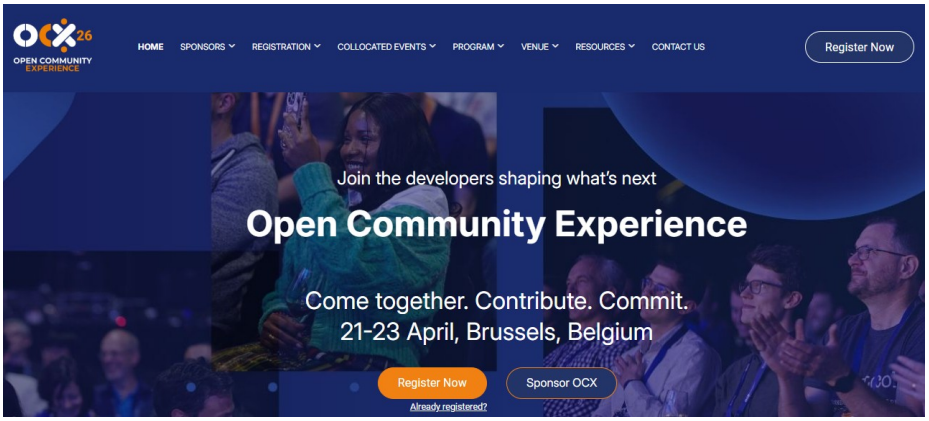
Would you like to bring a challenge, mentor a team or take part? Follow our channels for the open calls.

Consortium

Welcome to the Eclipse Foundation!

We are pleased to welcome the **Eclipse Foundation AISBL** (Belgium) as a new partner of the DeepTechSeeds consortium, taking over from EIT Manufacturing. The Eclipse Foundation is one of the world's largest open-source software foundations, home to hundreds of open-source projects and a global community of developers, and the organiser of the Open Community Experience (OCX), where DeepTechSeeds held its session in April.

Its experience in open collaboration and in building developer communities brings a valuable perspective to our work on talent ecosystems for early-career researchers. We also thank EIT Manufacturing for its contribution to the project.



The Open Community Experience (OCX), the Eclipse Foundation's flagship conference, where DeepTechSeeds held its session in April 2026

About the Eclipse Foundation

- Based in Brussels, Belgium, as an international non-profit association (AISBL)
- Hosts more than 400 open source projects
- Brings together more than 300 member organisations
- Active in areas such as AI, automotive and mobility, cloud, IoT and edge, and developer tools

Learn more at www.eclipse.org

Deliverables

Period and Upcoming Deliverables

https://deeptechseeds.eu/deliverables/

Title	Submission Date	Status
SUBMITTED		
D1.1 - Project Management Handbook	Submitted – November 2025	Sensitive
D1.2 - Data Management Plan	Submitted – December 2025	Sensitive
D1.3 - Gender Equality Strategy	Submitted – November 2025	Sensitive
D6.1 - Communication and Dissemination Plan	Submitted – January 2026	Public
D2.1 - Analysis Report on Charter Implementation	Submitted – February 2026	Public
D4.1 - Transversal Deep Tech Skills Outlook	Submitted – May 2026	Public
D2.2 - Implementation Framework	Submitted – July 2026	Public
UPCOMING		
D5.1 - DTT Platform	**October 2026**	**Public**
D4.2 - Deep Tech Skills Outlook Modules	**March 2027**	**Public**
D6.2 - Policy Brief (Intermediate)	**March 2027**	**Public**

Interesting Links:

1. **WIDERA Funding -** https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/widening-participation-and-spreading-excellence_en
2. **European Research Area (ERA) -** https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu/
3. **THE EUROPEAN COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCHERS -** https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/7da29338-37bf-4d51-b5eb-a1571b84c7ad_en?filename=ec_rtd_research-competence-presentation.pdf