

SPIDER Final Conference: Digital Transformation Beyond Borders

Shaping the Future of International Cooperation and Connectivity

14 & 15 April, 2026 - Bonn, Germany

Register [here](#)

SPIDER is a European Union-funded project that extends the longstanding tradition of collaboration between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean concerning digital transformation and R&I.

EVENT DETAILS

Date & Time:

- 14 April 2026 from 18:00 to 21:00

Venue: Welcome Reception at [Deutsches Museum](#), Ahrstraße 45, 53175 Bonn

- 15 April 2026, from 08:30 to 18:00

Venue: DLR Projektträger. [Heinrich-Konen-Straße 5, 53227 Bonn](#), Germany. Room 018

Format: In-person event

DESCRIPTION

[This event](#) offers a **unique opportunity for policymakers, institutional representatives, leaders from research and education networks (NRENs), innovative actors, and international partners to deepen their engagement and strengthen cooperation** across **Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean**, while also connecting with partners from other regions.

Positioned at the intersection of **policy, innovation, and digital transformation**, the SPIDER conference creates a strategic space for dialogue, exchange, and collaboration around shared challenges and opportunities in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Throughout the day, participants will engage with **key results and highlights from the SPIDER project**, gain insights from cross-regional experiences, and take part in forward-looking discussions that reinforce **international collaboration on digital transformation**.

The programme includes two inspiring keynote speakers, framing the conversation around the theme “Digital Transformation beyond Borders,” and is complemented by two focused panel

sessions: one dedicated to EU–LAC cooperation on digital transformation, and another exploring challenges for stimulating international collaboration in R&I.

Register for the event [here](#)

AGENDA

14th April

Time	Session
18:00 – 21:00	Welcome reception at the Deutsches Museum Bonn
	Creative Spark Sessions <i>Martina Desole, Director of the European Network of Living Labs</i> <i>Robert Sanders, Team Leader, European Business and Innovation Centre Network</i>

15th April

Master of ceremonies: Johanna Füllmann. DLR (Germany)

Time	Session
08:30 – 09:00	Registration & Welcome Coffee
09:00 – 09:20	Opening Session: Digital Cooperation in a Changing World <i>Stephanie Splett-Rudolph, DLR (Germany), Yolanda Ursa, Inmark (Spain)</i>
09:20 – 09:40	Policy Perspectives from Europe: Priorities for International Digital Cooperation <i>Tbd, European Commission representative (Belgium)</i>
09:40 – 10:00	From Vision to Action: Strengthening EU–LAC Digital Collaboration through SPIDER – Project Overview <i>Yolanda Ursa, Inmark (Spain)</i>
10:00 – 10:45	Keynote: Digital transformation beyond borders <i>Christoph Grundig, GREATECH (Germany)</i>
10:45 – 11:15	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
11:15 – 11:30	Mapping the State of EU–LAC Digital Cooperation: Spiderhub AI-platform

	<p><i>Cristian Patiño, Ecuadorian Corporation for the Development of Research and the Academy - CEDIA (Ecuador), and Johanna Füllmann, DLR Projektträger (Germany)</i></p>
11:30 – 11:45	<p>Advancing DEI and Human-Centred Digital Transformation - Insights from the SPIDER Digital Dialogues Implementation Forum - DIF <i>Maria Fernanda Cabrera, Polytechnic University of Madrid - UPM, LifeSTech (Spain)</i></p>
11:45 – 13:00	<p>1st Panel - EU-LAC Digital Transformation: Cooperation and Key Lessons <i>Regional cooperation models, lessons learned, and priorities for future EU-LAC digital transformation. The discussion will explore how SPIDER outcomes contribute to the long-term sustainability of the EU-LAC Digital Partnership and the BELLA Network.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Moderator: Carlos Gamboa, Advanced Research and Education Network of Costa Rica's National Council of University Chancellors - RedConare (Costa Rica)</i></p> <p><i>Panelists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Luis Cadenas - RedCLARA (the Latin American Cooperation of Advanced Networks). ● Tom Fryer - GÉANT (the pan-European Research and Education Network). ● Ruben Carrandi- EU-LAC Digital Accelerator. ● Priscila Tie Assahida Moreira - Enrich in LAC. ● Claudia Romano- EU-LAC ResINFRA. Ministry of Education and Culture of Uruguay. ● Anneken Reise - EU-LAC interest Group. DLR <p><i>Open questions from the audience - 15 minutes</i></p>
13:00 – 14:00	<p><i>Lunch</i></p>
14:00 – 14:45	<p>Keynote: The role of Latin America's ICT Industry in EU-LAC Digital Cooperation <i>Paul Fervoy, Vice President of ALETI</i></p>
14:45 – 15:00	<p>A Human-Centred Approach: Guidelines for Sustainable Digital Cooperation <i>Cristian Patiño, Ecuadorian Corporation for the Development of Research and the Academy - CEDIA (Ecuador)</i></p>

15:00 – 15:15	<p>Leveraging the BELLA Infrastructure for EU–LAC Collaboration – The Way Forward <i>Leandro Neumann Ciuffo, Brazilian Research and Education Network – RNP (Brazil)</i></p>
15:15 – 16:30	<p>2nd Panel- Global Digital Transformation: Cooperation Beyond Regions <i>International cooperation models, shared infrastructures, and partnership frameworks that support R&I collaboration beyond borders. The discussion draws on SPIDER experiences and collaboration in global initiatives to identify success factors and common challenges.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Moderator: Stefan Wagener, DLR (Germany)</i></p> <p><i>Panelists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU – Indo Pacific Digital Partnership (INPACE). Svetlana Klessova, INPACE Project coordinator, ENRICH GLOBAL President, G.A.C Group Research and Innovation Partnerships Director (France) • EU – LAC Digital Partnership (SPIDER). Paola Arellano, Chilean Research and Education Network– REUNA (Chile) • EU – Africa Digital Partnership (SEADE). Fredy Ríos Silva, Steinbeis (Germany) • EU – Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and the USA Digital Partnership (INSTAR). Rute Sofia, Research Institute of the Free State of Bavaria for software-intensive systems- fortiss (Germany) • Next Generation Internet Transatlantic Fellowship Program between EU–US and Canada (NGI Enrichers). Blandine Chantepie-Kari (USA) • 28 Digital. Alessandra Zini, 28 Digital (Belgium) <p><i>Open questions from the audience – 15 minutes</i></p>
16:30 – 16:40	Group Picture
16:40 – 17:10	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
17:10 – 17:25	<p>Connecting Innovation Communities Across Regions – The SPIDER Twinning Programme <i>João Amaral / Carolina Turcato, EURA (Portugal)</i></p>
17:25 – 17:40	<p>Looking Ahead: A Roadmap for EU–LAC Cooperation on Digital Transformation <i>Luciana Ayciriex, INMARK (Spain)</i></p>
17:40 – 18:00	<p>Closing and Final Remarks <i>Eugenia Peñaloza, INMARK and Johanna Füllmann, DLR Projektträger</i></p>

18:00

End

ABOUT SPIDER

SPIDER stands for **EU-LAC Strategic Partnership for the Implementation of Digital Dialogues in R&I Cooperation**. It is a **European Union-funded project** that builds on the longstanding tradition of collaboration between the **European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC)** in the field of **digital transformation and research and innovation (R&I)**.

This initiative brings together key stakeholders from both regions to strengthen digital cooperation and **bridge the gap between EU-LAC digital dialogue commitments and their practical implementation**, while actively promoting the values of a **human-centred and inclusive-driven digital transformation**.

At the core of the project lies the ambition to **unlock the full potential of the BELLA infrastructure**, ensuring its effective use as a catalyst for impactful EU-LAC cooperation in research, innovation, science, education, and digital transformation.

The project has a total duration of **30 months**, running from **1 November 2023 to 30 April 2026**.

ABOUT THE BELLA NETWORK

The **BELLA Programme ([Building the Europe Link to Latin America and the Caribbean](#))** is a **collaborative initiative led by RedCLARA and GÉANT**, and **co-financed by the European Union**, aimed at strengthening **long-term digital interconnectivity** between the research and education communities of **Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean**.

BELLA provides **high-capacity, resilient connectivity** between **GÉANT in Europe** and **RedCLARA in Latin America and the Caribbean**, linking the **National Research and Education Networks (NRENs)** of both regions. This intercontinental connection is enabled by **EllaLink**, a **6,000-kilometre submarine fibre-optic cable** directly connecting Europe and Latin America.

By significantly improving digital connectivity across continents, the BELLA Programme **opens new opportunities for scientific, educational, cultural, and innovation-driven cooperation**. It facilitates the exchange of **high-performance computing resources, Earth observation data, and advanced digital services**, supporting a more **integrated, collaborative, and future-oriented EU-LAC digital ecosystems**.