

# SPIDER Final Conference: Digital Transformation Beyond Borders

*Shaping the Future of International Cooperation and Connectivity*

14 & 15 April, 2026 – Bonn, Germany

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

## 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.

## AGENDA

### 14th April: Welcome reception at the Deutsches Museum Bonn

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

Time	Session
18:00- 18:20	Registration
18:20- 18:30	<b>Welcome words</b> <i>Johanna Füllmann, DLR (Germany) and Luciana Ayciriex, Inmark (Spain)</i>
18:30- 19:00	<b>Creative Spark Sessions</b> <i>Martina Desole, Director of the European Network of Living Labs (Belgium)</i> <i>Robert Sanders, Team Leader, European Business and Innovation Centre Network (Belgium)</i>
19:00- 20:00	<b>Museum Tour Kickstarts with Museotainers</b> <i>Moderated introductory sessions in small groups, offering an accessible entry point into the world of Artificial Intelligence</i>
20:00- 21:00	<b>Networking with Food and Drinks</b>
21:00	End of the activity

### 15th April

**Master of ceremonies:** Johanna Füllmann. DLR (Germany)

Time	Session
08:30 - 09:00	<b>Registration &amp; Welcome Coffee</b>
09:00 -09:20	<b>Opening Session: Digital Cooperation in a Changing World</b> <i>Stephanie Splett-Rudolph, DLR (Germany), Yolanda Ursa, Inmark (Spain)</i>
09:20 -09:40	<b>From Vision to Action: Strengthening EU-LAC Digital Collaboration through SPIDER</b> <i>Yolanda Ursa, Inmark (Spain)</i>
09:40 - 10:20	<b>Keynote: Digital transformation beyond borders</b> <i>Christoph Grundig, GREATECH (Germany)</i>

10:20 – 10:40	<p><b>Mapping the State of EU–LAC Digital Cooperation: Spiderhub AI-platform</b> <i>Cristian Patiño, Ecuadorian Corporation for the Development of Research and the Academy - CEDIA (Ecuador), and Johanna Füllmann, DLR Projektträger (Germany)</i></p>
10:20 – 10:40	<p><b>Advancing DEI and Human–Centred Digital Transformation - Insights from the SPIDER Digital Dialogues Implementation Forum - DIF</b> <i>Maria Fernanda Cabrera, Polytechnic University of Madrid - UPM, LifeSTech (Spain)</i></p>
10:40 – 11:25	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
11:25–13:00	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Panel - EU–LAC Digital Transformation: Cooperation and Key Lessons</b> <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> <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"> <li>• Latin American Cooperation of Advanced Networks (RedCLARA). Luis Cadenas (Uruguay)</li> <li>• Pan-European Research and Education Network (GÉANT). Tom Fryer (Belgium)</li> <li>• EU–LAC Digital Accelerator. Ruben Carrandi, EBN (Belgium)</li> <li>• European Network of Research and Innovation Centres and Hubs in Latin America and the Caribbean (Enrich in LAC). Priscila Tie Assahida Moreira (Brazil)</li> <li>• EU–LAC ResINFRA. Claudia Romano, Ministry of Education and Culture of Uruguay (Uruguay)</li> <li>• EU–LAC interest Group. Anneken Reise, DLR (Germany)</li> </ul> <p>Open questions from the audience - <i>15 minutes</i></p>
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 14:45	<p><b>Keynote: The role of Latin America's ICT Industry in EU–LAC Digital Cooperation</b> <i>Paul Fervoy, Vice President of the Latin American Association of Information Technology Entities- ALETI (Costa Rica)</i></p>
14:45 – 15:00	<p><b>A Human–Centred Approach: Guidelines for Sustainable Digital Cooperation</b> <i>Cristian Patiño, Ecuadorian Corporation for the Development of Research and the Academy - CEDIA (Ecuador)</i></p>

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

## 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**.