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D5.4 – SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (INTERIM VERSION)

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Glossary

AISBL	Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif, Non-Profit Organisation
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
DLT	Distributed Ledger Technologies
EU	European
H2020	Horizon 2020
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
KERs	Key Exploitable Results
EAG	External Advisory Group
EC	European Commission
ESOs	European Standard Organisations
MSP	Multi-Stakeholder Platform on ICT Standardisation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSBs	National Standard Bodies
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
R&I	Research and Innovation
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SDOs	Standard Development Organisations
TWG	Technical Working Group

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is an output of WP5 “Engagement and Sustainability” and in particular task 5.3 which focuses on how to ensure a sustainability path for the project.

The deliverable provides information on how the project plans to ensure the sustainability of its main assets and identifies the main elements likely to guarantee the continuation of the activities after the project ends.

The deliverable starts with an introductory statement of the main goals and a positioning of the deliverable in relation with other deliverables. The Key Exploitable Results (KERs) including the Grants Platform, the EUOS (European Observatory for ICT Standardisation), the Standards Academy, the Technical Working Groups, the community, the funded fellows and policy-oriented events are described in detail and accessibility and re-usability practices are identified for each of them. Significant synergies are also described as part of the impact produced by the project that can help add value to its assets and support their future usage.

The document then outlines the sustainability paths which have already been identified for the project. The first and foremost is its continuation under the follow-up project StandICT.eu 2026¹, currently under contract negotiation at the time of writing and submission of this deliverable. This will have an expected start date of the 1st February 2023, should there be no issues with the GA, with a clear mandate and avoiding any possible overlaps with the current StandICT.eu 2023 project. Alternative funding scenarios are also explored, including the creation of an AISBL to ensure the continuation of the funding scheme.

The final chapter concludes with key messages and next steps.

2 INTRODUCTION

StandICT.eu 2023 is an EU H2020 Coordination and Support Action (CSA) started in September 2020 with the main aim of ensuring a neutral, reputable, pragmatic and fair approach to support and incentivise ICT the presence of standardisation specialists from European and Associated states in the international ICT standardisation scene to promote and uphold European priorities. It builds on the legacy and success of the precursor StandICT.eu (2018-2019) and has delivered numerous, relevant outputs which have evolved over the two editions of the project and need to be sustained in the future, as the project approaches its final months.

2.1 SCOPE AND GOALS OF THE DELIVERABLE

This deliverable specifically addresses the sustainability plan for the principle Key Exploitable Results (KERs) produced by the project and deemed to be of particular significance both to the EC and the European ICT standards community.

¹ Negotiated under GA number:101091933. Project Partners are: Trust-IT Srl, Affiliate Entity Commpla srl (IT), European Digital SME Alliance (BE), OpenForumEurope AISBL (BE), AUSTRALO Interinnov marketing Lab SL (ES), Frunhofer Gesellschaft zur forderung der angewandten Forschung EV, (DE).

2.2 RELATION WITH OTHER PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The following StandICT.eu 2023 submitted and future deliverables are related to this document:

- D3.1 Call monitoring report no.1
- D3.2 Call monitoring report no.2
- D3.3 Call monitoring report no.3
- D3.4 Call monitoring report no.4
- D3.5 Call monitoring report no.5
- D3.6 Call monitoring report no.6
- D4.1 Plan for communication & stakeholder’s engagement strategy & plan and promotion of the open call
- D4.2 Interim report on communication & stakeholder’s engagement strategy & plan and promotion of the open call
- D4.3 Interim report on education in standardisation
- D4.4 Final report on communication & stakeholder’s engagement strategy & plan and promotion of the open call
- D4.5 Final report on education in standardisation
- D5.1 EUOS interim position statements
- D5.2 Interim Report on Ecosystem Building
- D5.8 Sustainability report (final version)

2.3 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The document is divided in the following sections:

- **Introduction** – Highlighting the high-level scope of the document and its main content.
- **Sustainability of project results** – Describing the main project KERs, how they are currently made widely accessible or re-usable to maximise their exploitation and future sustainability, also leveraging on significant synergies.
- **Sustainability path towards StandICT.eu 2026** – Showing the preliminary plan, to be refined as the current project progresses, to handover the main KERs to the follow-up StandICT.eu 2026 end ensure continuity. Some options for sustainability beyond StandICT.eu are also presented.
- **Conclusions** to summarise the main key messages.

3 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

3.1 KEY EXPLOITABLE RESULTS

Key Exploitable Results are defined as an identified main interesting project result which has been selected and prioritised due to its high potential to be “exploited” – meaning to make use and derive benefits – downstream in the value chain of a

product, process or solution, or act as an important input to policy, further research or education. Following this definition, the project has identified 7 tangible main KERs hereafter described.

3.1.1 GRANTS PLATFORM

Under WP3 / Task 3.2 *Maintenance and evolution of the StandICT.eu platform* lead by TRUST-IT, a new release of the public pages of StandICT.eu 2023 was rolled out building on the successes underpinning the pre-cursor StandICT.eu Project and with clear entry point for all applicants applying to the Open Calls through the *Grants Platform* section, which not only ensures an agile and completely paper-free access to the Open Calls but also supports the entire evaluation process (as shown in Fig. 1), as well as contracts, monitoring of the progress of the fellows, which also feeds into the EUOS and impact publications to payment at the end of the cycle. In short, its further development now covers the entire open call process from publication of the calls to the conclusion of activities by the recipients and storage of all related documents.

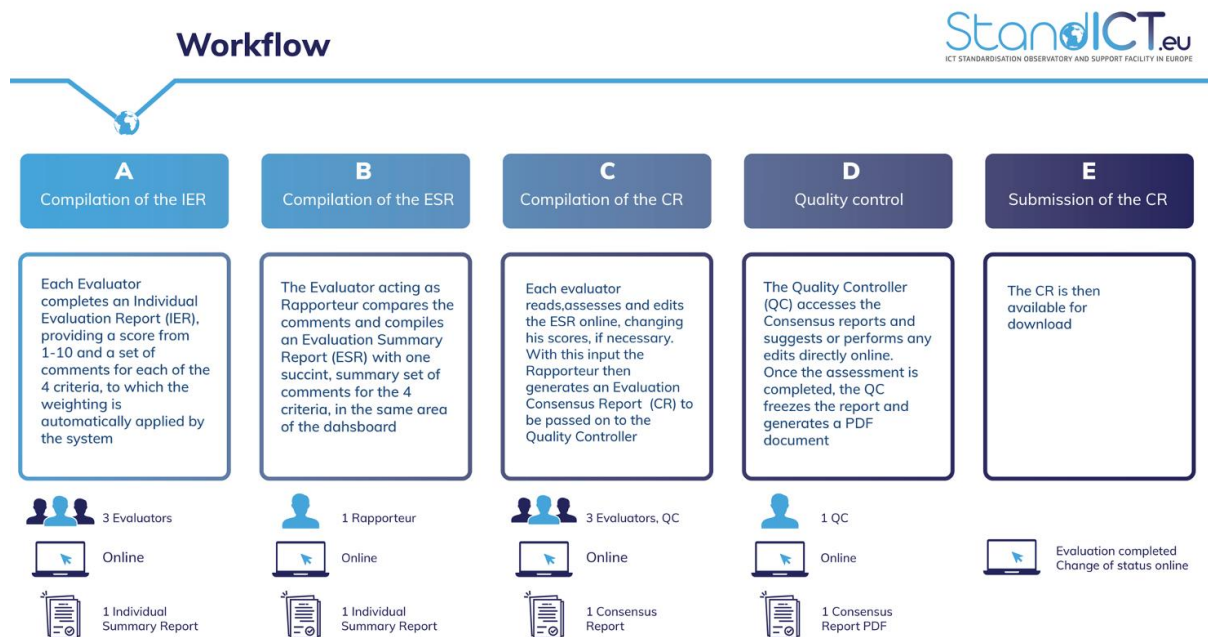


Figure 1 – Overview of the Evaluation Workflow introduced in StandICT.eu 2023

The Grants Platform provides access to password-protected areas with varying levels of privileges for the four categories of end-users foreseen (*the applicants* – both to the EPE and Fellowship calls; *the EPE* to evaluate the open calls; *the EAG* to contribute to the open call topics and the Call Management Team). Accompanied by agile, synchronised, digital processes the Grants Platform serves as a unique interface for all matters related the open calls from i) a simplified process to submit a proposal to any Open Call by the applicants via their dashboard; to ii) assignment of the proposals received by the Call Management Team to the EPE (and their subsequent evaluation via the EPE dashboard); to iii) an online shared space for the 3 members of the EPE assigned to a given proposal to share opinions, reach consensus phase and produce an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR); to the Quality Check and iv)

acceptance/rejection of the Report by the Quality Controller using the same shared space and v) sharing a polished, quality-controlled Evaluation Summary Report with the applicants. Of note iii) and iv) and v) were newly introduced in StandICT.eu 2023 to ensure an overall fairer and more transparent process).

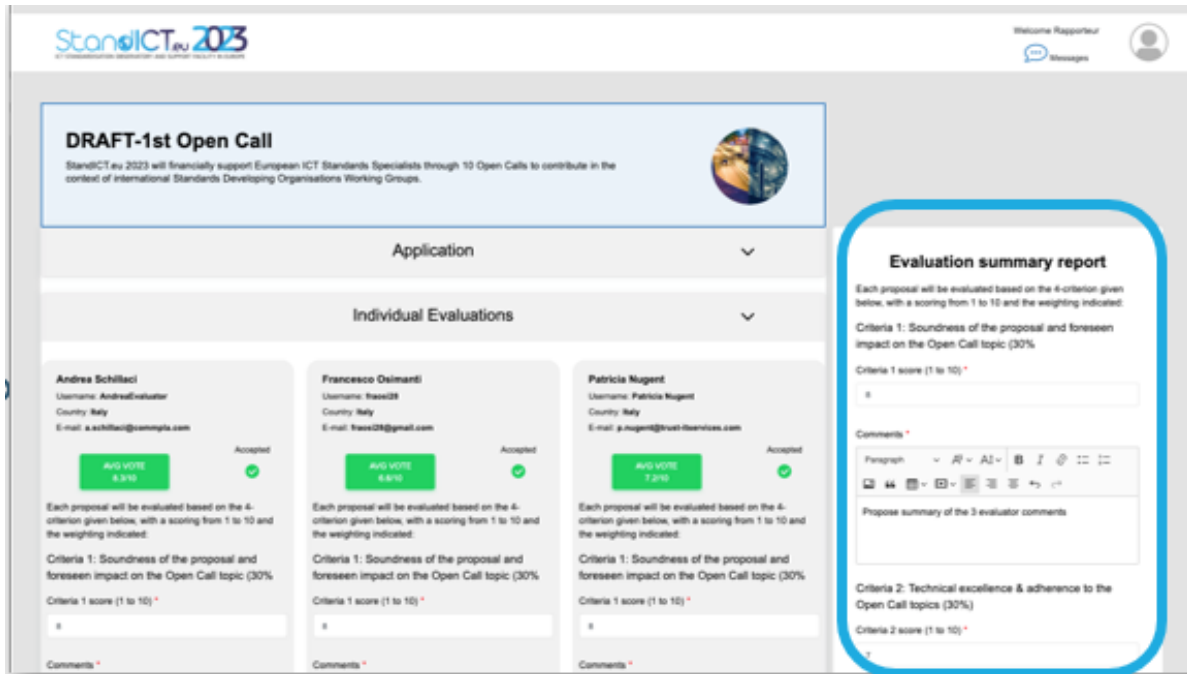


Figure 2 – Sample Dashboard (EPE Rapporteur) to compile the ESR

3.1.2 EUOS – EU OBSERVATORY FOR ICT STANDARDISATION (Standards Repository & Discussion Forum)

Within WP2 / Task 2.2 , led by DCU, StandICT.eu 2023 has developed an Observatory for ICT Standardisation with the goal of mapping the most relevant standards in the ICT field (Repository) and encouraging productive discussion around the most relevant trends and topics in ICT Standardisation (Discussion Forum).

The repository can be freely used by any interested party visiting the StandICT.eu website and is easily accessible via a dedicated search engine that facilitates browsing and discovery of relevant standards. At the moment of writing, the Repository counts 1979 mapped standards that can be filtered by relevant fields such as topic, ICT domain and SDO involved. It is a comprehensive collection of standards and working groups, both published and under development. The repository is fed manually and curated by the project consortium following inputs from experts involved in the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) described in the next paragraph. While this manual process has initially guaranteed control over the accuracy of the information which is entered and its coordination, the time and labour-intensive nature of this activity poses constraints on the the scaling and growth of the repository. Therefore, this most certainly requires further reflection as to how to make this resource sustainable. Several options have been examined in this respect and a number of these hypothesis are included in chapter 4.

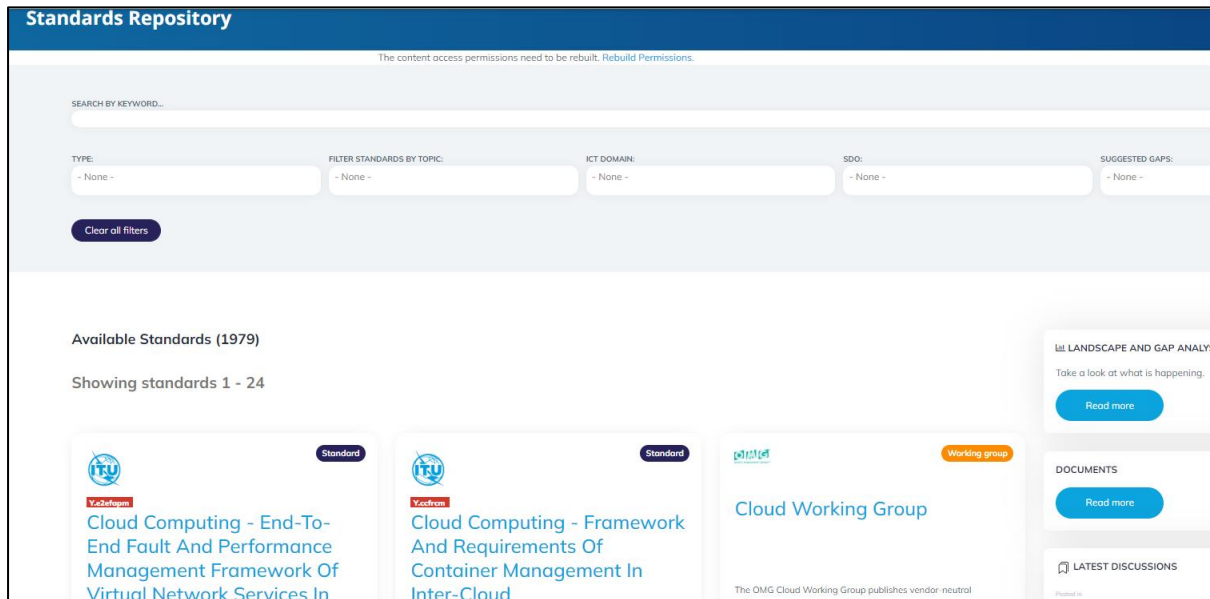


Figure 3 – Overview of the Standards Repository search page

The Discussion Forum is an online space where different Focus Groups have been created in several ICT-related topics including 5G Communications, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Big Data, Circular Economy, Cloud Computing, Edge Computing, IoT, Cybersecurity, Quantum Computing and many others. Any user registered to the StandICT.eu website can access the discussion area and post content. All the comments and material (e.g. documents, publications, links) are publicly visible.

The EUOS Observatory represents a tangible KER for the project as it provides a rich and easily accessible knowledge hub which can act as a reference point both for ICT standards experts to contribute to ongoing discussions under a given domain and perform standards scouting, and for less experienced users who can learn from the educational material and information available.

3.1.3 EUOS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

The TWGs are a series of groups that gather reputable Standardisation experts on pivotal ICT domains, set-up with the primary objective to harness specialists' advice and stimulate discussion among SDOs, public bodies, academic institutions and acclaimed specialists to provide an expert overview of documents and relevant activities for the standardisation in this field (11 at the moment of writing – Cybersecurity, Ontologies, Blockchain, IoT and Edge Computing, Robotics, Smart Cities, Trusted Information, Digital twin, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data and the EUOS Academy Group). The conclusive and most tangible outputs of the activity of these TWGs result in the production of “*Landscape and Gap Analysis Reports*”, a series of overarching documents that provide an accurate overview of the diverse array of global standardisation work underway in the different domains tackled by each TWG and the various organisations behind it.

At the time of writing, 4 Reports have undergone the complete process leading to their publication and dissemination and more specifically:

1. [Landscape of AI Standards](#) (issued in June 2021)

2. [Landscape of Smart Cities Standards](#) (issued in December 2021)
3. [Landscape of Trusted Information Standards](#) (issued in February 2022)
4. [Landscape of Digital Twins](#) (issued in June 2022)

The joint effort led to the following achievements (steadily growing on a monthly basis), measured through the Zenodo counter:

- Landscape of AI Standards – 2963 views & 2737 downloads
- Landscape of Smart Cities Standards – 1162 views & 855 downloads
- Landscape of Trusted Information Standards – 682 views & 626 downloads
- Landscape of Digital Twins Standards – 824 views & 620 downloads.

More reports are in progress, covering different ICT fields and with a date for release expected throughout the course of 2023 (i.e. Blockchain, Ontologies, IoT and Edge, Robotics and so forth). The critical goal of the Reports is to provide qualified and timely contribution to the definition of European policy in different areas of ICT standardisation both in terms of future policy measures to support standardisation and the sustainability options of such measures.

Landscape analysis reports



Figure 4 - Snapshot of the four released Landscape Analysis Reports

It is important to note that these landscape reports are aligned with European Commission priority areas and already in the Spring of 2022 it was decided amongst the consortium members and the European Commission officers to work on specific topics that were high on the policy agenda of the European Commission. These topics include: **Quantum technologies, brain computing, metaverse, trusted chips, digital product passport**. The latter have all been included in the topics to cover within the Open Calls.

3.1.4 EUOS STANDARDS ACADEMY

The Standards Academy, led by the EUOS Academy Group, serves as a knowledge-hub on key factors of the Standardisation ecosystem, the functioning of the Standards development process, and its economic and societal benefits. This area, in continuous progress and frequently updated, is envisaged as the go-to reference hub for all typology of training needs about ICT standards where all the material provided is carefully selected or produced by esteemed researchers and trainers who work in the standardisation arena, as well as by SDOs and targeted EC Training Programmes delivered on ICT Standardisation.

To facilitate the learning process of newcomers in the field, the Academy offers tailored starter packs which are grouped to satisfy different needs and knowledge’s categories, based on the level of expertise of each user (beginners, intermediate and advanced). New technical improvements are expected to be released, particularly the implementation of a new feature to allow each TWG Academy member to edit the training catalogue both to speed up the generation of the content and improve the average quality and accuracy.

First time here? Take a look at our starter packs



[Read More And Find Out Which Pack Mostly Suits Your Needs](#)

Browse the training catalogue and find the resources for your needs



Figure 5 - Current entry page of the EUOS Standards Academy

3.1.5 COMMUNITY OF ICT STANDARDS ORGANISATIONS AND STANDARD-FOCUSED ENTITIES

StandICT.eu 2023 has developed and nurtured a series of collaborations in the form of Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) or cross-project collaborations to ensure optimal visibility of the StandICT.eu 2023 initiative within key European organisations and associations.

The primary goal has been to establish a diverse, vast and influential network through strategic synergies with ongoing initiatives both at European and global level, in order to secure and tap into the wide range of competencies and skills needed to provide the required international breadth to the Project.

This is pursued through the wide range of activities aiming to achieve the following outputs:

- **Concrete involvement and ongoing coordination with Regional and International SDOs** with the objective of promoting the opportunities offered by the Open Calls among the relative ICT Communities, disseminating the

impact attained through the work carried out by the funded fellows and TWGs, identifying and highlighting arising topics and/or challenges requiring further research and policy inputs, to be timely included in the Open Calls priority list.

- **Enduring and reciprocal cooperation with National Standard Bodies** to obtain a complete mapping of the different national perspectives and steer ICT Policy development towards a more Eurocentric approach (See also section 3.3.1).
- **Strengthened partnerships with main actors of the European SMEs ecosystem** through a series of agreements to be reached with the associations representing the interests of European SMEs in Standardisation (StandICT.eu 2023 has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Small Business Standards (SBS). Furthermore, solid co-operations are in place with the European Digital SME Alliance and SMEunited.
- Synergies with similar initiatives including European (and national) funded R&I projects with Standardisation-focused tasks or effort. (11 MoUs have been signed at the moment of writing, plus others under discussion).
- **Concerted effort to develop continuous synergies with European PPPs** (some of them already ongoing (ECSO, Big Data Value PPP, 5G PPP, 6G-IA, High Performance Computing PPP, Open Forum Europe, CLAIRE AI, Digital Europe and more).

An overview of the organisations, projects and initiatives with active collaboration is provided in the figure below.



Figure 6 - Mapping of current synergies of StandICT.eu 2023

3.1.6 FUNDED FELLOWS

At the time of writing, the project has successfully launched a total seven Open Calls, which have led to the funding of 264 projects for a total of approximately 2.3 million Euros of the 2.95 million Euros earmarked for Financial Support to Third Parties.

The most tangible outputs and research outputs of those individuals have been summarised in a series of dedicated publications, called “*Following the Fellows Impact Reports*”, which highlight a variety of evidence-based outcomes gained through the project’s open calls. The reports place the individuals who have made a successful application to the StandICT.eu 2023 open calls, in the spotlight and give them the opportunity to speak about their work and the added-value they are contributing to standards efforts as awardees. The StandICT.eu 2023 fellows share not only the results garnered, but also highlight the impact of these results.

Besides, following inputs and recommendations coming from the interim project’s review, the StandICT.eu Fellows’ contributions have been now exploited both to provide meaningful content under the EUOS discussion forum as well as to reinforce several EUOS TWGs, especially those where a lack of specialists in a given sector was more acute.

Four Impact Reports have been released so far, with 5 more expected by the end of the project. The Reports present key facts and figures showing how the results obtained can help to tackle European ICT Standardisation priorities and gaps, how the tangible impact achieved contributes to societal and industrial challenges and to direct recommendations for the future standardisation policy efforts towards the persisting needs. The “Following the Fellows” report are available in a dedicated area of the website ([here](#))





Figure 7 - Front Cover of StandICT.eu 2023 “Following the Fellows” reports

3.1.7 POLICY-ORIENTED “WALK AND TALK” WEBINARS

The organisation of a series of Webinars has been strategic to successfully achieve the outreach objectives, to spark and initiate new synergies with other projects that have standardisation as a key-component of their work plan, to effectively promote each Open Call cycle, to provide adequate visibility to the different EUOS Technical Working Groups (TWG) in front of the StandICT.eu community and beyond and to provide valuable feedback in relation to the policy aspect of each ICT theme tackled.

The series of Webinars have been instrumental to guarantee a substantial contribution in view of the definition of European policies and guidelines in the respective technological areas. The project will continue following this pattern and next planned Webinars will pursue the objective of providing recommendations in support of policy measures for Standardisation whereas more support is requested (as indicated during the Interim project’s review), such as the following domains (to be held in the last 12 months of the project):

- Webinar/ Workshop on Trusted Secure Chips
- Webinar / Workshop on Quantum Technologies
- Webinar / Workshop on Cloud, IoT, Edge Standardisation
- Webinar / Workshop on Digital Product Passport
- Webinar / Workshop on Education on Standardisation - Women in standardisation

[Available here](#) the recording of the previous “Walk and Talk” Webinars. More details and information on each Webinar included in D2.3 Workshops and Webinars report – 2nd issue (delivered in July 2022).

3.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF KERs FOR FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

In order for a project to be sustainable, it should have the capacity to ensure the use and exploitation of its results and assets not only during the project lifetime but also after its end. One step towards this achievement is granting both project beneficiaries and any other interested stakeholders the widest possible access to project KERs.

The table below summarises how each KER is made available, promoted and accessible for possible external use and integration into other research, industrial or policy initiatives in the world of ICT standards

KER	Brief description & Value Proposition	Problem addressed	Target stakeholders	Accessibility and/or re-usability options
Grants Platform	A custom-made grants platform which delivers an online workflow for proposals and grants. It ranks and manages all applications received with a multi-user platform and online processes. It addresses administration and funding; a clear proposals evaluation dashboard and a monitoring reporting system	Researchers and experts in standardisation need support, also from a financial viewpoint, to carry out their activities and maximise their impact	ICT Standardisation Experts	The grants platform, specifically developed for the first edition of the project, has become a tested tool to manage open calls that can be easily re-used and adapted for similar initiatives based on open call cycles applications and related administrative process management.
EUOS – EU Observatory for ICT Standardisation	An online area where international ICT standardisation activities, published or in progress standards and standardisation gaps are monitored and collected (Standards Repository) and where end-users can provide their feedback or contribute to discussions (Discussion Forum). The EUOS represents a rich and easily accessible knowledge hub and a reference point for both ICT	Stakeholders engaged in ICT Standards development or implementation have difficulties to find relevant information about the current ICT standards, this information is fragmented and the access is often restricted. They also lack of opportunities to share insights of the engaged standards development on specific ICT areas, which is an obstacle in creating synergies among different ICT standardisation initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers in R&I projects and ICT PPPs involved in ICT standardization. • Members of SDO, ESO and other standardization organization’s communities. • Members of national standardization organizations. • ICT Standardisation experts 	The EUOS Observatory is freely accessible by any interested visitor of the StandICT.eu website. It is displayed in the website’s homepage and directly accessible at this page . ADRA-e ² community will extract the standards related to AI, Data & Robotics standards as part of their portfolio of assets at the end of their project in 2024. Both Trust-IT & DCU are part of this initiative to support this.

² <https://adra-e.eu/> ADR Observatory of standards an online observatory of standards and standardisation activities, developed with a group of experts in the field.

	standards experts, that can meaningfully contribute to the ongoing discussion under the correlated domain as well as perform standards scouting, and less experienced people who can learn from the educational material and information available. In addition,			
EUOS Technical Working Groups	A series of groups that gather reputable Standardisation experts on pivotal ICT domains, set-up with the primary objective to harness specialists' advice and stimulate discussion among SDOs, public bodies, academic institutions and acclaimed specialists to provide an expert overview of documents and relevant activities for the standardisation in ICT field	Lack of updated overviews of the ICT standardisation trends and ongoing standardization work on specific ICT sectors, which is an obstacle in creating synergies among the engaged ICT standardization efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers in R&I projects and ICT PPPs involved in ICT standardisation. • Members of SDO, ESO and other standardization organization's communities. • Members of national standardisation organizations. • ICT Standardisation experts • Business Developers in SMEs and Industry engaged in ICT Standard development 	The landscape reports produced by each TWG are published on Zenodo and freely downloadable. They are also accessible via the StandICT website and promoted on social media and newsletters to ensure the widest diffusion
EUOS Standards Academy	A knowledge-hub on key factors of the Standardisation ecosystem, the functioning of the Standards development	Lack of structured information on standards, easy accessible based on topics and experience level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers in R&I projects and ICT PPPs involved in ICT standardisation. 	The EUOS Standards Academy is freely accessible by any interested visitor of the StandICT.eu website. It is displayed in the website's homepage and directly

	process, and its economic and societal benefits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Developers in SMEs and Industry engaged in ICT Standard development 	accessible at this page .
Community of ICT Standards Organisations and Standard-focused entities	A series of collaborations in the form of Memorandum of Understanding(s) or cross-project collaborations to ensure optimal visibility of the StandICT.eu 2023 initiative within key European organisations and associations	Need to Increase awareness on the importance of standards, not only bringing experts to table but also assisting with early adoption of standards once they are readily available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of SDO, ESO and other standardization organization's communities. Members of national standardization organizations. 	Jointly organised events and cross-dissemination activities of the results of the initiatives who have developed a synergy with StandICT.eu continuously take place and are promoted and accessible via the website, newsletters and social media channels
Funded Fellows	European Individuals, who work on ICT standards who have received financial support to conduct standard- related activities in the ICT domain	Low participation of ICT standardisation experts in International SDOs, limited impact of standards experts' activities on standardisation results at an international level	ICT Standardisation Experts	The main success, results and impact of the standardisation activities carried out by the fellows are accessible via a series of dedicated publications, called " Following the Fellows Impact Reports ". These are published on Zenodo, and the website and promoted via newsletters and social media
Policy Oriented "Walk and Talk Webinars"	A series of Webinars whose insights can be instrumental to guarantee a contribution in view of the definition of European policies and guidelines in the respective technological areas.	Limited awareness on the importance of standardisation for policy making, for security and reliability of products and services, for trade development and, in general, societal advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers in R&I projects and ICT PPPs involved in ICT standardisation. Members of SDO, ESO and other standardization organization's communities. 	Webinars are online freely accessible events that can be attended live or accessed later on demand via the recording and post-event newspieces available on StandICT.eu website, under the "Events" section

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of national standardisation organizations. • ICT Standardisation experts • Business Developers in SMEs and Industry engaged in ICT Standard development • General Public 	
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Table 1- Summary of KERs and their accessibility or re-usability features

In addition to the considerations reported in the Table above, it is worth mentioning that the public [website](#) hosting all project related resources and information will be transferred to the follow-up project, StandICT.eu 2026, and afterwards maintained online as a static resource for 5 years after the end of the project. Trust-IT will ensure access to information on the website. The website will be maintained with minimal technical effort, credentials to access and manage the platform could be given to other people indicated by the EC.

The main KERs have now been described with the synergies in place to maximise their use and impact. A preliminary plan to handover such KERs to StandICT.eu 2026 will then be described in paragraph 4 with a mention to the possibility to establish an AISBL after the end of StandICT.eu. All the information contained will be further elaborated and finalised in the last version of the Sustainability report (due in M36), with contributions from all Partners, paving the way for a sustainable European ecosystem for standardisation.

3.3 SYNERGIES

Synergies play an important role in increasing the accessibility and possible impact of project's KERs. For this reason, StandICT.eu has paid particular attention to the development of meaningful relationships with SDOs, NSBs, policy players and other projects which contribute to the valorisation of standardisation results also via a recently launched [success stories](#) section that collects standardisation best practices in the ICT domain.

3.3.1 SYNERGIES WITH STANDARDS DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS BODIES

At the moment of writing, StandICT.eu managed to establish solid and proficient cooperation with the national associations of the 27 European member states (NSBs) in pursuit of critical objectives, as the following ones:

- To support the sustainability of the training and education outreach.
- To act as a powerful sounding board to convey the opportunities of StandICT.eu towards the respective national networks of ICT Standard professionals.
- To contribute to an exhaustive mapping of different requirements across priority ICT areas, with a view to ensure a proper promotion of the European interests and influence on a global scale in the Standardisation arena.
- To support the organisation of joint meetings, events and/or workshops.

StandICT.eu largely expanded the size of its network and synergies with both European and International SDOs through a systematic, timely and regular engagement, in pursuit of the overall objectives of the project, which are taking form of the following activities:

- Direct liaison with Chairs and Co-chairs of Working Groups and Technical Committees also by exploiting the connections of the EAG members (to embark them in virtual or physical events, to ask for support to identify important novelties, gaps or challenges in the relative ICT field or to contribute to the various EUOS TWGs as active member for the provision of the "Landscape Analysis and Gaps reports").
- Look for opportunities of visibility at PPPs related events (like the EBDV Forum, or 3GPP, or 5GPP, or euRobotics, or EFFRA, ECSO, SES conference and so forth).
- Gathering relevant feedback to help see how ICT Standards are supporting European companies, consumers, or the public authorities in achieving improved competitiveness.
- Preparation of industrial use cases to then showcase as success stories on StandICT.eu 2023 website.

StandICT.eu 2023 has currently in place valid ongoing collaboration with the following Standards Bodies: 3GPP, CEN, CENELEC, CSA - Cloud Security Alliance, DMTF, ETSI, ISO, HL7, IEC, IEEE, IETF, IIRDS, NIST, OASIS & OASISOpen, OGF - Open

Grid Forum, OMG, OneM2M, SNIA, W3C.

3.3.2 SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PROJECTS

Many of StandICT.eu 2023's activities have implications and influence on other EU projects or can benefit from their outputs so it is vital to collect inputs and requirements from projects that play a part in the project achieving its goals.

Since its onset, StandICT.eu has leveraged its partners' networks and previous experience to work closely with a set of projects that share synergies. A selection of the main projects StandICT.eu has ongoing or planned joint activities is provided below, focusing on those projects that have the highest potential to jointly exploit and support the diffusion of the identified KERs. Further general synergies are in place with other projects as well and the full description is available in D5.1.

Project Name	Description	Synergy with StandICT.eu 2023
Adra-e	ADRA-e is actively supporting the ADRA Association on AI, Data and Robotics in promoting a trustworthy, safe and robust AI, Data and Robotics ecosystem, compatible with EU values and regulations.	This project shares with StandICT.eu the mission of responding to modern challenges including the digital transition, industrial competitiveness, and technological sovereignty via working on standards. Three different TWGs (on Data, Robotics and AI) will be developed by ADRA-e following StandICT.eu model and chaired by DCU, who is partner of both projects
The European Cloud, Edge and IoT Continuum	This is an umbrella initiative that aims at contributing to the coordination of a portfolio of projects in the Cloud-Edge-Computing Continuum and ensure consistent exploitation of their outcomes to help regain European competitiveness in core internet infrastructures. The initiative is supported by the joint effort of two Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) respectively focused on the demand and supply side of the computing continuum, which will cooperate to reach the stated common goal, also by benefitting from the synergies and legacy of other existing EU projects in the domains of Cloud, Edge, IoT, AI, and connectivity, including NGIoT and H-Cloud	StandICT.eu runs Technical Working Groups made of standards experts in charge of mapping the standardisation landscape and gaps in specific ICT domains. One of the active TWG is focused on IoT and Edge. The project is also planning events dedicated to Cloud, Edge and IoT technologies in early 2023 where experts from the CloudEdgeIoT initiative can be involved. Moreover, one of the goals of the supply-side CSA is favouring the technical and business convergence of the three domains via open source opportunities and open standards
Ontocommons	OntoCommons is an H2020 CSA project dedicated to the standardisation of data documentation across all domains related to materials and manufacturing. The project lays the foundation for interoperable, harmonised and standardised data documentation through ontologies, facilitating data sharing and pushing data-driven innovation, to bring out a truly Digital Single Market and new business models for European industry, exploit the opportunities of digitalisation and address sustainability challenges.	OntoCommons representatives have synergised with StandICT.eu for the creation of a TWG on Ontologies which will report on the standardisation landscape in the materials and manufacturing domain, enriching the portfolio of reports produced under the StandICT.eu 2023 initiative
HSbooster.eu	HSbooster.eu's central goal is to boost the entire	HSbooster.eu provides its services across several horizontal and vertical

	European Standardisation dialogue between H2020 and HE projects with corresponding SDOs to increase the European impact on standardisation and strengthen EU competitiveness	domains, including ICT technologies. There are several ongoing synergies among the two projects, namely the invitation of StandICT.eu EPE members to join and feed the larger HSbooster.eu EPE, mutual support in communication of respective initiatives and events, synergies related to the Standards Academy which will be referenced in the HSbooster Standards Academy under development. Additional collaboration opportunities among the two projects include synergising for the creation of a wider HSbooster.eu Standards Repository or a similar global standard mapping tool which covers multiple domains and could be fed by StandICT for the section related to ICT
6GStart	6GStart is a CSA driving strategic R&I orientations from the European ICT community, the 5G Public Private partnership and the Smart Networks and Services. It is developing methodologies for collecting metrics data and coordinating results and initiatives at EU scale, including Member States, while facilitating international cooperation across key regions and promoting European priorities.	Connectivity technologies are enablers of several other ICT technologies and infrastructures and object of several standardisation efforts. 6G Start is also involved in a pre-standardisation working group that identifies standardisation and regulatory bodies to align with e.g. ETSI, 3GPP, IEEE, develops a roadmap of relevant standardisation and regulatory topics for 5G and 6G and tracks relevant advancement by projects in their standardisation activities
Winning proposal in Blockchain DEP	The Digital Europe Programme (DEP) has recently opened a call for funding (DIGITAL-2022-DEPLOY-02-BLOCKCHAIN-STANDARD) for a CSA that has to interact with relevant initiatives in the standardisation and blockchain/DLT domain. StandICT.eu is listed in the call text as one of the initiatives that will need to be specifically interacting with the new funded project	Depending on the content of the winning proposal, several activities can be put in place to synergise with the ongoing StandICT.eu workplan. These include the Standards Repository which could be enriched with blockchain standards collected through the new project, the organisation of joint events focused on Blockchain/DLT, and synergies with respect to the work carried out by the StandICT.eu TWG on Blockchain
Stand4EU	STAND4EU aims to strengthen the links between research, innovation and standardisation ensuring that standardisation is an integral part of the European research and innovation landscape. STAND4EU will map and identify key stakeholders and actors involved in standardisation activities at national, regional (EU) and international level to allow a proper identification of the obstacles hampering the standardisation efforts within the scope of 4 main technological domains: Additive	The two projects share the focus on standardisation and support to European research and innovation landscape, as well as the emphasis on ICT-related topics. STAND4EU has started in September 2022 and represents a key project to synergise with to work on the identification of the key bottlenecks in the standards development lifecycle and in the development of recommendations and solutions which will be an important legacy of the projects and will aim to make the standards development process more efficient.

	Manufacturing, Welding, Smart manufacturing/Industry 4.0/Digitalization/ Artificial Intelligence & Circular Economy	
Medina	MEDINA is an EU funded-research project that aims to provide a holistic framework that enhances cloud customers' control and trust in consumed cloud services, by supporting Cloud Service Providers (IaaS, PaaS and SaaS providers) towards the successful achievement of a continuous certification aligned to the EU Cybersecurity Act (EU CSA). The proposed framework will comprise tools, techniques, and processes supporting the continuous auditing and certification of cloud services where security and accountability are measurable by design. As the MEDINA framework is leveraged into a cloud supply chain, it continuously supports the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of security measures to ultimately achieve and maintain a certification.	The collaboration with Medina represents a significant opportunity to enhance the impact of both projects in the standardisation field, and to benefit from each other's achievements. The framework MEDINA is developing matches perfectly StandICT.eu ultimate goal which is to facilitate and support standardisation activities and the digital transformation of European companies'. The two projects collaborate hand in hand to provide mutual visibility to all the outreach activities that will be organised around efforts on the Cloud Cybersecurity and Cloud Certification as well as contributions to ICT Standards, including use cases and success stories. The projects also cooperate on activities connected to the StandICT.eu 2023's "EUOS – European Observatory for ICT Standardisation", including the population of the StandICT.eu ICT Standards Repository and providing mutual support in creating synergies with other projects and initiatives active in the ICT standardisation domain.

Table 2 - Main synergies with related projects

3.3.3 POLICY- ORIENTED SYNERGIES

Over the course of the project, StandICT.eu established a firm and close relationship with the Multi-Stakeholder Platform on ICT Standardisation (MSP) and the project was invited to attend its meetings on a regular basis with a permanent seat. StandICT.eu 2023 aims to improve and consolidate this engagement primarily, with the intent to provide valuable insights that can influence the definition of key gaps and priorities to be addressed in the future ICT Rolling Plan for Standardisation. At the same time, StandICT.eu is actively contributing, now and in the future through the activities of the TWGs, EAGs and funded fellows, to tackle the actions for the development and revision of European standards or European standardisation deliverables which are necessary and suitable for the support of Union legislation and policies. The objective is to extend this synergy to the High-Level Forum on Standardisation, a special entity envisaged under the “EU Strategy on Standardisation” to assist the Commission in anticipating upcoming standardisation priorities (inclusive of representatives from Member States, European Standardisation Organisations and National Standardisation Bodies, industry, civil society and academia).

The European Commission represents the most prominent policy stakeholder for the project with its multiple EC directorates. The Consortium Partners have established meaningful relationships with Directorates such as DG CONNECT, DG RTD and the Research Executive Agency through their involvement in numerous H2020 Innovation and Coordination Support Actions. StandICT.eu 2023 benefits in particular from the participation of two members of Dg Connect in its External Advisory Group, ensuring a constant dialogue between the European Commission and the Project, which through its continuous interaction across national and international SDOs is able to pinpoint topics that require further research, and provide coordinated guidance to steer policy priorities.

4 SUSTAINABILITY PATH TOWARDS STANDICT.EU 2026

4.1 HANDOVER OF CURRENT STANDICT.EU 2023 ASSETS TO STANDICT.EU 2026

At the moment of writing the present deliverable, the StandICT.eu 2023 consortium has been informed of an upcoming project to be funded as a follow-on of the present one and namely “StandICT.eu 2026”. This will be managed by the same partners from the current consortium with the addition of new ones who will bring additional and complementary skills and resources.

Given the circumstances, it is obvious that a first approach towards sustainability could be to hand over the current assets and KERs of StandICT.eu 2023 to the subsequent initiative. This would help guarantee full exploitation of what has been developed so far and at the same time provide a strong starting base for StandICT.eu 2026 to further improve the KERs it will receive as well as create additional ones.

The figure below summarises in a timeline how some of the key assets and activities will be smoothly transitioned to StandICT.eu 2026

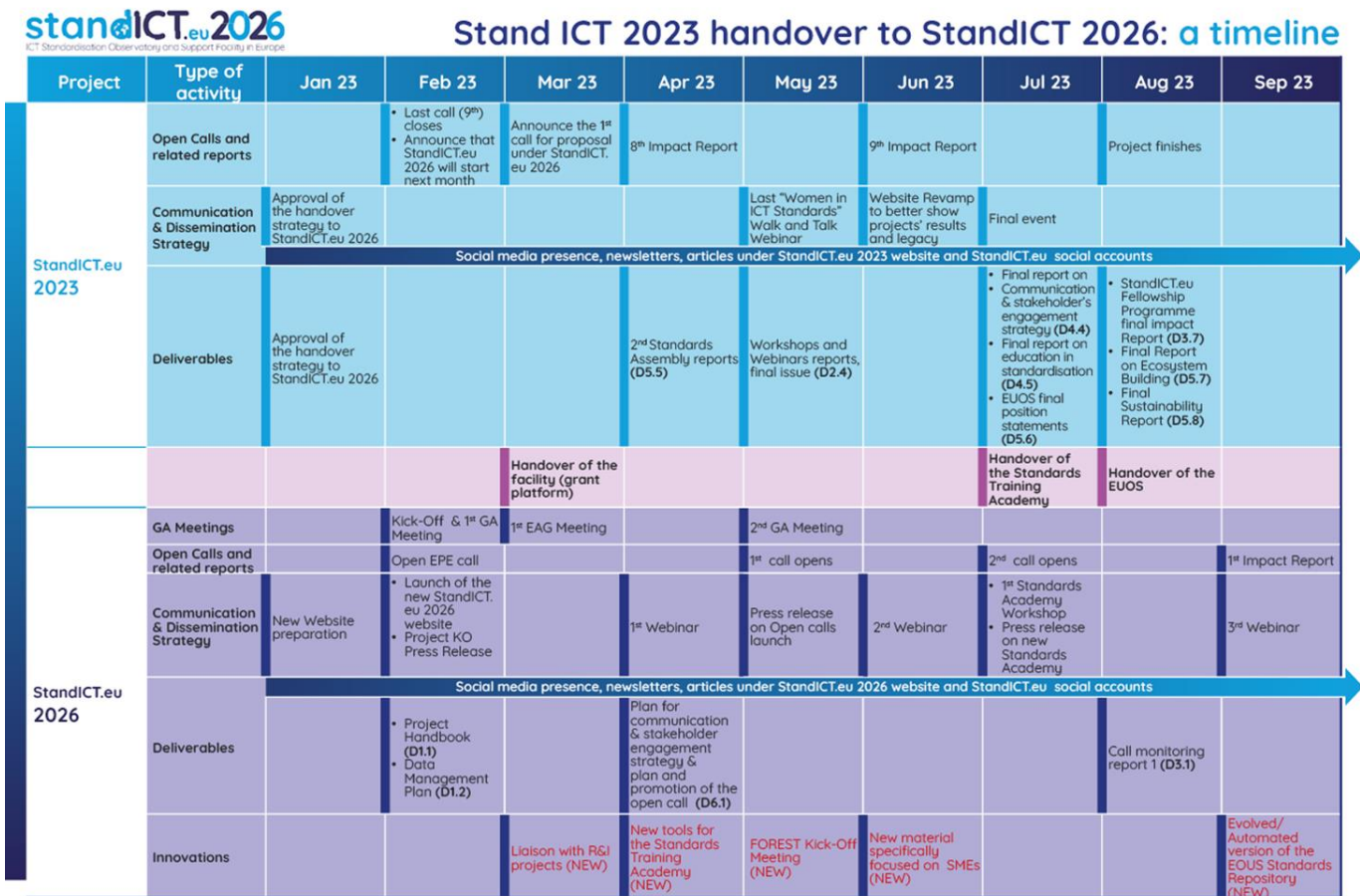


Figure 8 - StandICT.eu 2023 handover to StandICT.eu 2026: a timeline

The preliminary plan is for some key assets to be transferred over the 7 months in which the two projects will possibly overlap. StandICT.eu 2023 will conclude its activities in August 2023, while StandICT.eu 2026 is expected to commence in February 2023. The first asset to be handed over will be the Grants Platform, which is essential for the continuity of the operations linked to the open calls. Secondly, the EUOS and the Standards Academy will be transferred and enriched with a focus on content that will become more prominent under StandICT.eu 2026, such as ICT standardisation training materials specifically tailored for SMEs. The remaining assets will be available on the common website and gradually transferred over the remaining months of StandICT.eu 2023 until its official end and administrative closure. Specific activities will be carried out for each of the two projects in the time they overlap and the whole handover will be supported by a smooth flow of communication actions aligned with the established branding and style (Social Media main channels will not vary). In this way StandICT.eu 2026 will be able to build perfectly on the legacy of the StandICT.eu 2023.

Specific innovations and improvements will then be developed under StandICT.eu 2026. Purely by way of example, some ideas on how to better exploit the potential of StandICT.eu 2023 assets under the following project can be shared regarding the EUOS Standards Repository.

The EUOS is currently managed mostly manually with standards being periodically

uploaded in parallel with the TWGs' release of the landscape reports and the filling of sectoral databases of standards provided by each TWG in excel format to the project team that is in charge of executing the upload of the standards in the repository.

While StandICT.eu 2023 aimed to set up the observatory, attract experts, populate the repository and highlight standards' gaps, the idea is to pass on to the next step of making the EUOS a scalable and sustainable asset. In order to evolve into a more advanced version of the EUOS, some progressive steps are necessary to make the transition gradual and more efficiently split the investment required from a more automated system.

The first step towards scalability is to increase the dynamism of the Standards Repository feeding process. The idea is to involve the fellows being funded through one of the project Open calls by asking them to contribute to the population of the repository as part of their contractual obligations. They would submit descriptions of relevant standards using an online form available at StandICT.eu. In order to ensure quality, relevance and homogeneity in the contributions, some moderators, to be selected among the trusted and expert members of the StandICT stakeholder ecosystem, will be appointed as controllers of the content submitted before it can be published in the EUOS. A limited number of users beyond the project team (e.g. TWG chairs or SDOs representatives who are familiar with the project) shall also be selected as holders of special "rights" in the system so that the content submitted by them skips moderation and is automatically published in the EUOS. This system should lead towards a progressively more decentralised and inclusive standards scouting and classification process that ensures higher speed in the repository population, lower probability of mistakes or imprecisions due to the double checking, and higher engagement with the EUOS becoming a more active tool for interaction in the community. The transition towards this version of the EUOS will require the creation of a copy of the current EUOS developed under the remit of StandICT.eu 2023 that will be used as a sandbox to create the new version of the EUOS, conduct tests, collect early feedback and design a fully functioning process that will be then handed over to StandICT.eu 2026 and go into production.

4.2 STANDICT.EU 2026 WORKPLAN TO ENSURE CONTINUITY

StandICT.eu 2026 will fully embrace StandICT.eu 2023 spirit and build on its legacy not only because it will inherit its main assets, as already shown in paragraph 4.1, but also because it will aim at implementing an overall workplan that is aligned to the current initiative on several aspects. These include:

- The same coordinator, i.e. Trust-IT who has also successfully managed the previous and first StandICT.eu edition.
- A similar organisational structure including the same partners as StandICT.eu 2023, i.e. DCU and AUSTRALO respectively leading the main activities around the EUOS Observatory and TWGs (DCU) and the Fellowship Programme (AUS), and three new partners that will help potentiate StandICT.eu' s impact in the fields of policy, education and support to SMEs.

- A coherent branding and communication plan aligned with the already established one and targeting the vast community of stakeholders already created in the current initiative.
- An expert External Advisory Group (EAG), still led by DCU, made of ICT standardisation experts in charge of providing information and guidance to the project. Some of the members of the StandICT.eu 2026 EAG are also part of StandICT.eu 2023 EAG to ensure continuity in the overall strategy (e.g. Lindsay Frost, Brian McAuliffe, Karl Grun).
- An External Pool of Evaluators (EPE) in charge of evaluating funding applications collected via the open calls. At least 50 experts will be recruited for StandICT.eu 2026 via a continuous open call, but also in this case the consortium will draw from the already established and well known list of trustable and experienced experts who have been contractualised under the previous StandICT.eu initiatives.

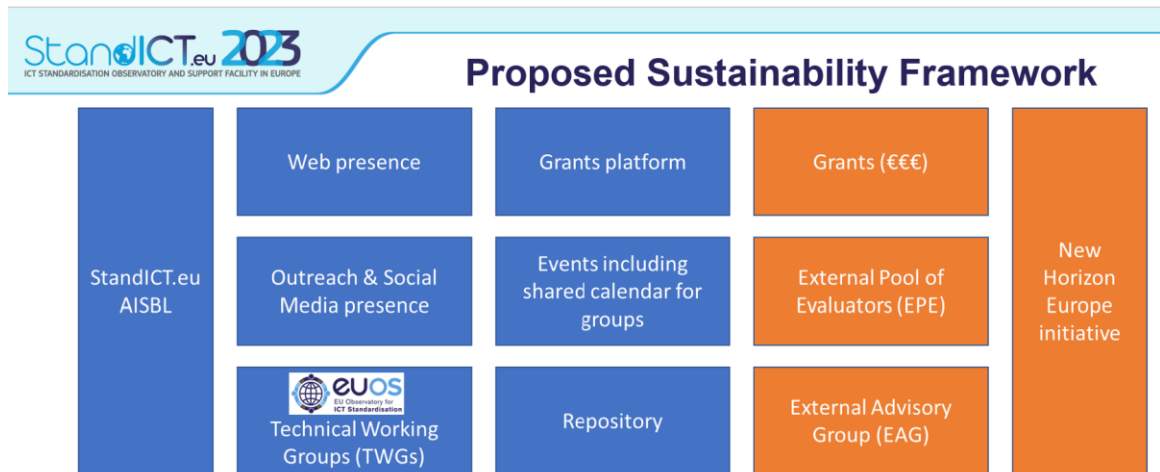
4.3 BEYOND STANDICT.EU 2026

As StandICT.eu 2026 will progress, additional actions will be needed to maximise the results exploitation potential and the sustainability of the initiative. Some measures in this direction will include:

- The continuous development of the StandICT.eu website inclusive of the main elements and assets here described (e.g. Grants Facility and EUOS Observatory, Repository), as principal tool to showcase and access a wide range of research results (e.g. publications, Landscape & Gap Analysis reports, use cases and success studies, Impact Reports). With an engaging UX, the portal will also give access to the platform, the events including shared calendar for groups, a detailed online FAQ and practical guides for Applicants.
- The creation of an International Directory on Education about Standardisation (idEaS), a freely accessible knowledge hub with tailored e-learning packages and browsable guides and meant to be as an evolution of the current Standards Academy;
- The continuous expansion of the StandICT.eu 2023 research portfolio to all science, industry & technology domains, leveraging on the signed MoUs and the establishment of permanent links with various EC DGs.

Future funding scenarios will then need to be evaluated. Put aside the possibility to still continue the project's activities under another follow-up project, a concrete alternative would be the transformation of StandICT.eu into an **AISBL** (Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif), a non-for-profit organisation that would sign service agreements with any national, EU, international and private initiatives working on ICT standardisation to guarantee the funding scheme continues thanks to the AISBL reselling its assets.

A preliminary sustainability framework is proposed in the figure below describing the above which was presented at the interim review in March 2022. The fact that there will be a successor in StandICT.eu 2026 allows for articulating how this may work in the longer term.



The project at the end of 2023 could consider becoming an AISBL and could consider signing a service agreement between StandICT.eu AISBL and any national, European, international and private initiatives that deals with ICT standardisation to make sure the funding scheme may continue

Figure 9 - Proposed Sustainability Framework

5 CONCLUSIONS

StandICT.eu, with its 5-year experience (considering both StandICT.eu 2023 and its precursor StandICT.eu), has demonstrated that numerous opportunities exist to facilitate ICT standardisation advancement and support European presence in the wider international ICT standardisation scene. By undertaking the sustainability activities planned during the project and preliminarily described in this report, it is expected that the outputs of the project will continue to advance the ICT standardisation agenda in Europe. This deliverable has indeed provided an interim plan for StandICT.eu 2023's effort to ensure accessibility and sustainability of its assets.