Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand

Call for Grant Proposal Guidelines

AI4DPI University Research Partnerships, funded by the Gates Foundation.

Advancing Open-Source Digital Public Infrastructure in Asia-Pacific

Activity	Date
Call Opens	October 15, 2026
Information sessions	October 27-29, 2026
Application Deadline	November 30, 2026, 5:00 PM ICT (UTC/GMT +7)
Shortlisted applicants notified	December 15, 2026
Proposal Presentation and Q&A	January 4, 2027
Final selection announced	January 10, 2027

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Part A Background, Objectives and Scope of the Call for Proposals

1 Background and Rationale

1.1 Regional Context: The Digital ID Usage Plateau

Countries across the Asia-Pacific region have made significant progress in establishing foundational identification systems, with many achieving high levels of national ID coverage. However, a persistent "digital ID usage plateau" remains: while large segments of the population possess a national ID, the adoption and use of digital ID for accessing public and private services online remain uneven. Bridging this gap is essential if Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is to deliver on its promise of faster, more inclusive, and more affordable access to services.

1.2 Key Challenges to Digital ID Adoption

Limited Technical Capacity and Vendor Lock-in. Many governments lack the specialized in-house capacity needed to build and maintain advanced identity technologies such as face verification. As a result, they often rely on private vendors. In some cases a single vendor designs and delivers the entire national ID system. Over time, this dependence can create vendor lock-in, raise data sovereignty concerns, weaken public control over critical infrastructure and increase long-term costs. Open-source technology is not a universal replacement for existing solutions. It does, however, give governments credible alternatives against which to benchmark proprietary offerings. It also widens participation to academia and a broader, more competitive range of vendors.

High Cost of Proprietary Biometrics. Proprietary face matching and liveness detection remain a significant bottleneck for remote identity verification. Budget constraints on proprietary licenses have slowed digital ID adoption in parts of the region, and some countries are deploying face authentication through costly vendor-based solutions.

Low Awareness of Open-Source Wallets and Credentials. Most governments in the region are actively developing Verifiable Credential (VC) wallets. Many, however, are unaware that mature open-source options exist, or lack the technical capacity to evaluate them. A neutral, trusted party can bridge this gap by demonstrating these tools in a sandbox environment aligned with the country's own DPI. This allows decision-makers to quickly understand how the tools work and whether they suit national requirements.

Complexity of Open-Source DPI Systems. Open-source DPI systems can be challenging to master, particularly for institutions with limited technical staff. Tools such as AI assistants and agents can reduce the effort needed to deploy and maintain these systems. By lowering these barriers, such tools can make open-source options a more practical and sustainable choice for governments.

Lack of Inclusive Use Cases . Governments are seeking new VC use cases that drive meaningful adoption. The most effective use cases typically emerge from direct engagement with the communities they are meant to serve. Examples include:

- Smallholder farmers accessing agricultural subsidies.
- Women entrepreneurs require gender-intentional Know Your Customer (KYC) processes to enter formal banking.
- Elderly citizens and migrant workers needing portable health records.

2 Objectives of the Call

The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) under the project "Advancing Open Source Digital Public Infrastructure in Asia Pacific" funded by Gates Foundation invites universities in the Asia-Pacific region to become research and capacity-building partners. The overall objective of this call is to strengthen national capacity for open-source, inclusive Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in eligible Asia-Pacific countries by partnering with universities that can produce localized, vendor-neutral knowledge, build local expertise, and connect their wider ecosystems to national DPI development.

2.1 Expected Role of Partner Universities

Universities with strong capabilities in research, community engagement, and capacity development are uniquely positioned to support national DPI development. As independent institutions, they are expected to:

- Produce open, vendor-neutral knowledge that their government can use.
- Provide independent technical advice to national ID authorities and relevant government stakeholders.
- Build local expertise to reduce reliance on external vendors.
- Develop DPI knowledge and capacity within their academic communities.
- Connect students, startups, entrepreneurs and developers to the DPI ecosystem.

2.2 What We Are Looking For

The universities should aim for research and development with a clear practical application and country-level impact. The universities are expected to carry out work that:

- Addresses a clearly identified country need related to DPI development.

- Produces practical and usable outputs relevant to the national context.
- Establishes or strengthens a pathway to government and stakeholder engagement.
- Where applicable, supports adoption, testing, piloting, or further development by a relevant government authority.

3 Scope of Work: Work Packages and Research Tracks

3.1 Mandatory Work Packages

Every proposal must address three mandatory work packages. Universities may combine work packages and propose activities across all three as presented in Table 1 .

Table 1 : Overview of the Mandatory Work Packages

Work Package	Description and Examples
Work Package 1: **Research and Development**	Applied research and/or development activities that are relevant to the country's DPI context, based on an identified need, and capable of producing practical outputs. *Examples: country needs assessment, applied research, prototype development, pilot implementation, open-source tools, frameworks, technical solutions.*
Work Package 2: **Capacity Building**	Activities to strengthen DPI-related knowledge and capability within the university and, where applicable, in the wider community, appropriate to the country's current level of development. *Examples: curriculum or course development, training programs, workshops, etc.*
Work Package 3: **Community and Ecosystem Engagement**	Activities that contribute to the development of the wider DPI ecosystem in the country, connecting the university with students, developers, startups, government, and local communities. *Examples: local hackathons, entrepreneurship programs, community workshops, DPI awareness activities, participation in AIT-organized events, developer training.*

3.1.1 Work Package 1: Research and Development

Universities are invited to align their research and development activities with one or more of the tracks listed in Table 2. The tracks are organized from foundational to advanced, and universities should select those that best match their country's DPI context, their institutional capacity, and their team's expertise.

Cross-track proposals are encouraged where combining tracks strengthens the research contribution. In such cases, applicants should identify a primary track, explain how the selected tracks complement one another, and demonstrate that the combined scope remains feasible within the available funding envelope and project timeline.

While the tracks define the priority areas for this call, universities are not limited to them. Proposals addressing related research areas will also be considered, provided they clearly contribute to the objectives of Work Package 1.

* Research Document: Please reference and see details about research tracks in Annex: Research Tracks.

* Research under all tracks should focus on marginalized and vulnerable populations, including smallholder farmers, women entrepreneurs, elderly citizens, migrant workers, low-income groups, persons with disabilities, etc.

Table 2: Research Tracks under Work Package 1

Research Themes	Track	Focus
Needs Assessment and DPI Readiness	**Track 1: Needs Assessment and DPI Readiness**	Partner universities are expected to (1) map their country's identity ecosystem, including institutions, laws, policies, and technology, (2) engage key stakeholders (e.g., ID authority, relevant ministries, service providers, and target populations) through interviews, surveys, or focus groups, (3) identify priority gaps, inclusion barriers, and candidate use cases, and (4) assess readiness for open-source DPI adoption using a documented scorecard.

Research Themes	Track	Focus
Foundational Digital ID	**Track 2: Digital ID Establishment**	Intended for partner universities in countries without a digital ID system. Partner universities are expected to (1) analyze the civil registration and identification landscape, including legal and data protection prerequisites, (2) co-design a reference architecture and phased roadmap with the relevant government authority using open-source platforms (3) develop a sandbox-based POC of enrollment, ID issuance, and authentication (e.g., on the AIT sandbox), and (4) evaluate the POC for feasibility, cost, inclusion, and privacy.
Facial Verification and Open-Source PAD	**Track 3: Presentation Attack Dataset**	Partner universities are expected to build presentation attack datasets that represent their populations, for use in testing the PAD module (Track 4). They are also expected to document and validate their data collection protocol, including how dataset quality is assessed, guidelines on how the dataset should be used, and which evaluation protocol the dataset serves.
	Track 4: Model	Partner universities are expected to develop an open-source face Presentation Attack Detection (PAD) module. PAD helps detect attempts to deceive an identity system using a photograph, video, mask, or similar method. They are also expected to benchmark the model, document the total project cost broken down by category (for example, GPU costs), and analyze the model's weaknesses.
Wallets and Verifiable Credentials	**Track 5: VC Use Case**	Partner universities are expected to research, identify, pilot and evaluate VC use cases for marginalized populations in their country.
AI agents for DPI	**Track 6: Consent framework and trust architecture**	Partner universities are required to propose (1) consent frameworks, (2) trust architecture, (3) one relevant use case, (4) develop a prototype as a demonstrator of the framework, and (5) evaluate the prototype (framework) with a focus on effectiveness, cost, security, governance, and risks.

3.1.2. Work Package 2: Capacity Building

Work Package 2 aims to strengthen DPI capacity within each partner university and across its wider national ecosystem, with a particular focus on government officials, students, startups, and other relevant stakeholders. Capacity building will follow a train-the-trainer approach in two stages.

- **Training delivered by AIT.** Each partner university will nominate at least 20 participants including faculty members, researchers, students, or any stakeholders to take part in the capacity-building program delivered by AIT. Participants will gain the technical and practical knowledge needed to lead DPI training and engagement activities in their own country.
- **Training delivered by partner universities.** Building on the AIT training and on the knowledge generated through the project, partner universities will design and deliver capacity-building activities tailored to their local context, such as webinars, training sessions, and workshops. They also can develop curriculum or course materials. These activities should target government officials, students, startups, and other relevant stakeholders, and reach at least 50 participants over the grant period.

3.1.3. Work Package 3: Community and Ecosystem Engagement

Work Package 3 aims to connect each partner university to the regional DPI academic community convened by AIT, and to extend that community to students, developers, startups, and other stakeholders in the university's own country. Partner universities are expected to engage in four ways.

- **Participation in AIT hackathons.** Partner universities will take part in the 4 virtual hackathons organized by AIT during the grant period and support student and developer teams from their university to compete.
- **Local hackathons and DPI events.** Each partner university will organise at least one local hackathon or DPI event within its country. These events should draw on the university's research under this grant and be open to students, developers, startups and relevant stakeholders.
- **Contribution to the DPI community web portal.** Partner universities will contribute research outputs, resources, and regular updates to the DPI community web portal developed by AIT.
- **Presentation at AIT conferences.** Partner universities will present their research findings at the two DPI conferences organized by AIT during the grant period.

3.2 Country Impact Pathway

Every proposal must clearly demonstrate how the proposed work will create practical impact in the country. Proposals must explain the following logic:

Country Need → Proposed Activity → Output → Stakeholder Use / Adoption → Country Impact

The proposal should answer: "What problem does this project solve, for whom, and how can the result be used or adopted in the country?"

Not every project will achieve full adoption within the grant period. However, there must be a credible and realistic pathway toward practical use.

3.3 Data Privacy, Ethics, and Responsible AI

All activities under this program including research, pilot deployments, interviews, capacity building, hackathons, and conferences must comply with the following requirements.

Informed Consent: Informed consent is required before any activity involving human participants. Participants must be told the purpose of the activity, how their data will be used, and their right to withdraw at any time. Consent must be documented.

Biometric and Personal Data: Biometric and identity data must be handled with strict care. Researchers must collect only what is necessary, store data securely, limit access to authorized personnel, and delete data when it is no longer needed. Anonymised or synthetic datasets must be used in hackathons and testing environments.

National Data Protection Laws: All activities must comply with the applicable national law in the country where they take place. For example for Thailand the data protection law is Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), 2019.

Institutional Ethics Approval: All research activities involving human subjects, sensitive data, or other ethically significant elements require approval or a formal exemption determination from the institution's relevant ethics body (such as an IRB or Research Ethics Committee) before data collection begins.

Responsible AI: AI systems developed under this program must be fair, transparent, and secure. Training datasets must reflect the demographic diversity of target populations. Bias must be assessed and mitigated. All open-source outputs must include appropriate licensing controls to prevent proprietary reconfiguration or vendor lock-in.

Data Breach Reporting: In the event of a data breach, the responsible party must contain the incident immediately, notify the relevant national authority within the legally required timeframe, inform affected participants, and report to the program lead (AIT) within 48 hours.

Open Science Policy: All research funded under this grant must follow open science principles.

- **Methodology**: Research methodology must be fully documented and publicly available.
- **Findings and Outputs**: All reports, tools, frameworks, and software must be published under an open license, CC BY 4.0 for written outputs, and either the MIT License or the Apache License 2.0 for software. As a member of the DPI for Asia Pacific Community, each partner university is required to share all research findings and outputs with AIT and the broader community network. Sharing is a mandatory contribution as part of community membership.
- **Platform**: All outputs must be published on the community platform designated by AIT. AIT will communicate the platform details in due course. Until the platform is established, universities must submit their outputs directly to AIT for community distribution. Universities may additionally publish on GitHub or their preferred open platform, but contribution to the AIT-designated community platform is mandatory.
- **Data**: Universities may keep their data. Sensitive or non-shareable data may remain private. AIT does not require data submission.

Part B Grant Implementation and Funding Arrangements

4 Government Engagement Requirements

Government Engagement Obligations of Funded Universities

Regardless of whether a university has an existing government relationship, all funded universities must:

- Identify the relevant government institutions and stakeholders for their proposed work.
- Establish or strengthen appropriate engagement with those institutions during the grant period.
- Ensure that research outputs and practical deliverables are shared with and, where applicable, tested or used by the relevant government authority.

5 Grant Duration, Milestones and Deliverables

Each selected partner university's funded engagement runs for 24 months, from January 2027 to January 2029. Table 3 shows milestones and key deliverables under the grant.

Table 3: Milestones and Key Deliverables

Milestones	Description	Key Deliverables
Inception and Planning	Finalize the research/development plan, confirm government stakeholder engagement, set up a project team, and submit a work plan.	i) Approved work plan and budget ii) Letter of endorsement for Government engagement/national ID authorities iii) Assessment report
Implementation	Carry out the approved activities under all three mandatory work packages. Conduct capacity-building activities and community engagement. Submit progress reports.	i) Progress reports ii) Capacity-building activities completed iii) Community engagement completed
Finalization and Dissemination	Complete the research/development deliverables. Present findings to government stakeholders. Submit the final report and evidence. Participate in AIT knowledge-sharing activities.	i) Final project report ii) Research/development output delivered iii) Findings shared with government iv) Participation in AIT events

* **Assessment report:** Partner universities will survey local DPI adoption to identify current challenges, and gather adoption requirements from respective government institutions, technology providers, and other relevant stakeholders.

6 Funding and Budget Requirements

6.1 Grant Ceiling

Each selected partner university may receive a grant of up to USD 100,000 for the full grant period. The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) will determine the final award amount after reviewing the proposed activities, deliverables, and budget.

Important: The grant ceiling is a maximum, not a target or an entitlement. Applicants should submit a realistic budget that reflects their planned scope of work and institutional implementation capacity. Proposals that commit to more than what the team can deliver may present a delivery risk, which will be taken into account during evaluation.

6.2 Budget Preparation Principles

All costs proposed under the grant must be:

- **Necessary and directly attributable** to the proposed activities and deliverables;
- **Reasonable**, reflecting prevailing local market rates in the applicant's country;
- **Incurred within the grant period** and recorded in the university's accounts; and
- **Supported by a detailed budget justification** setting out the basis of each cost estimate (for example, unit cost, quantity, and duration).

Budgets should demonstrate value for money, meaning the economic, efficient, and effective use of resources to achieve the intended results. All budgets must be prepared in US dollars (USD).

6.3 Eligible Costs

The grant will support the following costs:

Work Package	Eligible costs
All work packages	Personnel costs; miscellaneous consumables such as office and computer supplies; travel and transportation; IT service subscriptions such as compute

	services, cloud storage, and AI tools; communications costs such as postal and courier fees and telephone charges.
Work Package 1: Research and Development	Field surveys; consultant fees;
Work Package 2: Capacity Building	Training packages; honoraria
Work Package 3: Community and Ecosystem Engagement	Event organization; honoraria

The following conditions apply:

- Personnel and consultant fees must be consistent with local market rates and the university's established pay scales.
- Travel and transportation must be reasonable, justified by the proposed activities, and consistent with the university's travel policy.
- Training, workshop, and event costs must be justified according to the expected number of participants.
- Costs outside these categories require AIT's prior written approval.

6.4 Ineligible Costs

Costs such as fixed assets (equipment, furniture, vehicles, etc., indirect costs may not be applicable for this grant proposal. The other details related to finance will be provided in the Budget Template.

Part C Eligibility, Application and Selection Process

7 Eligibility

7.1 Eligible Countries

Applications are accepted from universities located in the following ten countries:

1. Bangladesh
2. Bhutan
3. Indonesia
4. Laos
5. Nepal
6. Pakistan
7. Papua New Guinea
8. Philippines
9. Sri Lanka
10. Vietnam

7.2 Eligibility of Applicant Universities

An applicant university must meet all the following criteria:

- **Eligible location:** The university must be located in one of the eligible countries listed in Section 7.1.
- **Technical expertise:** The university must demonstrate expertise in at least one area relevant to DPI, such as digital public infrastructure, digital identity systems, presentation attack detection, verifiable credentials, data science, computer science, or a related DPI application field. Applications are welcome from all relevant faculties and departments, and interdisciplinary teams are strongly encouraged. Eligible departments include computer science, the social sciences, agriculture, and disaster risk management, as well as other sectors where DPI can improve service delivery, such as health, education, and finance.
- **Government relationship:** The university must demonstrate an existing or developing relationship with a relevant government institution. An existing relationship with the national digital identity authority is preferred. A university that does not yet have such a relationship must explain how it will establish appropriate government engagement during the grant period.
- **Institutional capacity:** The university must demonstrate that it has the team, administrative systems, and institutional support to manage the grant and deliver the proposed activities within the grant period.

8 Application Package and Required Documents

Applicants must submit the following documents as below.

- **Grant proposal (required).** Prepared using the prescribed template which can be obtained at https://ai4dpi.ait.ac.th/call-for-proposal/. The proposal must be submitted in two formats: an editable MS Word file (.docx) and a PDF version.
- **Proposed Budget (required)**. A completed Excel file using the provided Budget Template (.xlsx) which can be obtained at https://ai4dpi.ait.ac.th/call-for-proposal/ .
- **Curriculum Vitae (required).** A single PDF file containing the CVs of the Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigators, and other key team members, as appropriate. Each CV must not exceed three pages.
- **Evidence of government engagement (required).** One PDF file with at least one document showing the university's existing or developing relationship with a relevant government institution. Accepted documents include an MoU, cooperation agreement, letter of support, joint project documentation, or formal correspondence (such as emails or meeting records). Several documents may be combined into the one PDF.
- **A letter of support from the national ID authority or another government institution** (preferred) is welcome at this stage but not required. Each successful applicant must submit one before the grant agreement is signed. Note that the Letter of Support from national ID authority is not required at the time of initial submission. Applicants will be contacted by the AI4DPI team when the letter is required at a later stage.

9 Selection Process and Scoring Criteria

9.1 Selection Steps

AIT will assess proposals in five stages.

Stage 1: Administrative check. AIT will confirm that each proposal arrived by the deadline (November 30, 2026, 5:00 PM ICT). It will also confirm that all five required documents in Section 8 are included, in the required formats. Late or incomplete submissions will not go further.

Stage 2: Eligibility check. Proposals that pass Stage 1 will be checked against every criterion in Section 7: eligible country, technical expertise, government relationship and institutional capacity. Proposals that miss any criterion will not be evaluated.

Stage 3: Technical evaluation and shortlisting. An AIT review committee will score eligible proposals against the five equally weighted criteria in Section 9.3. The highest-scoring proposals will be shortlisted, and their applicants will be notified. Shortlisted applicants who have not yet submitted a letter of support from the national ID authority or the ministry responsible for digital identity must do so after notification (by December 15, 2026) and before the Proposal Presentation and Q&A session (January 4, 2027). Shortlisted proposals without this letter by that date will not proceed to the final selection.

Stage 4: Proposal Presentation and Q&A. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to present their proposal to the selection committee. The Principal Investigator and key team members should attend. Applicants will give a short presentation of their proposed work, followed by a Q&A session. This allows the committee to clarify the approach, work plan, budget, and government engagement plan.

Stage 5: Final selection. AIT will make its final selection based on evaluation scores and interview results.

During any stage, AIT may ask applicants for clarifications or for changes to scope or budget.

9.2 Disclaimers and Reservation of Rights

By submitting a proposal, applicants acknowledge and agree to the following:

- AIT will not reimburse applicants for any costs related to preparing or submitting a proposal.
- Issuing this RFP does not guarantee that AIT will make an award or enter into a subcontract.
- AIT may evaluate proposals and award a subcontract based on the initial submissions without further discussion or negotiation.
- AIT may ask shortlisted applicants to provide an oral presentation or written response in a subsequent round based on a more detailed scope of work.
- AIT may cancel the RFP or withdraw an award before signing the subcontract due to changes in funding, priorities, or program requirements from AIT or its client.
- All data produced under this RFP will belong to AIT. Applicants may not share or distribute such data without prior written approval from AIT or its designated representative.

9.3 Evaluation Criteria

The research proposals will be evaluated against the following (equally-weighted) criteria:

- **Relevance and Country Need:** A clear, evidence-based problem statement grounded in the DPI context of the country where the work will be carried out, and a solution-oriented response to that need. Alignment with the national ID authority's strategy or the country's DPI and digital government priorities, with the objectives of this Call for Proposals, and with the overall *Advancing Open-source Digital Public Infrastructure in Asia Pacific* project. Explicit attention to the needs of marginalized and underserved populations.

- **Quality of Approach and Methodology:** Clear articulation of the knowledge or implementation gap, and of the practical knowledge, tools, or evidence the project will generate. A robust research design and methodology suited to the selected track(s), and a coherent results chain in which activities across all three mandatory work packages lead logically to outputs and outcomes. High expected quality of deliverables.

- **Expected Outcomes, Impact and KPIs :** A credible pathway from country's need to country impact, with clearly identified beneficiaries (communities, sectors, and local government units) and the means by which they will benefit. Potential for uptake by government and other stakeholders, for replication in other regions or countries, and for benefits to continue beyond the grant period, including through the integration of DPI content into academic programs. Specific, measurable KPIs with baselines, realistic targets, and verification sources, linked to the expected outcomes and to the program's success indicators.

- **Feasibility, Team and Government Support:** A realistic work plan sequenced across the three implementation phases within the 24-months grant period, with key risks identified and credible mitigation strategies. A named project team with relevant expertise, a strong track record, and sufficient time commitment, backed by institutional support (administrative readiness, in-kind resources, and leadership buy-in). A documented existing or developing relationship with the national ID authority or another relevant government institution, and evidence of engagement from relevant local stakeholders.

- **Budget and Financial Management:** A realistic, well-justified budget that reflects local cost conditions, is directly linked to the proposed activities and deliverables, and offers good value for money. Scope and staffing proportionate to the requested amount, without over-commitment. Institutional systems, policies, and internal controls for managing, reporting, and auditing grant funds, and a track record of managing externally funded grants, supported by prior grant history and audit results.

10 Submission Instructions and Deadline

Submit the proposal via the website https://ai4dpi.ait.ac.th/call-for-proposal/ by uploading the files directly.

Submission deadline: November 30, 2026 at 5:00 PM Indochina Time (ICT, UTC+7).

11 Language of Proposals

All proposals, information, documents and correspondence exchanged between AIT and the applicant shall be in English.

12 Contact Us

Questions and Inquiries: Please direct all questions and inquiries to Ms. Kyi Thin Nu from AIT DPI Team at **ai4dpi-network@ait.asia**.

Call for Proposals: For the full Call for Proposals details and proposal and budget templates, please visit: **https://ai4dpi.ait.ac.th/call-for-proposal/ .**

13 Acknowledgments

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Annex: Research Tracks

Tracks are organised from foundational to advanced research. Each profile sets out the focus of the track, followed by its results chain from output to outcome to impact.

Deliverable Levels

Each research track requires a specific deliverable level. The table below defines each level.

Level	Definition	Applicable Tracks
Concept	A concept note	—
POC	Implemented proof of concept with benchmark results	Track 3, Track 4
Validated POC / MVP	POC validated with the partner's own users and stakeholders	Track 2, Track 5, Track 6

Note: Track 1 requires a needs assessment report, not a POC.

Needs Assessment and DPI Readiness

Track 1: Needs Assessment and DPI Readiness **Foundational research**

Partner universities are expected to (1) map their country's identity ecosystem, including institutions, laws, policies, and technology, (2) engage key stakeholders (e.g., ID authority, relevant ministries, service providers, and target populations) through interviews, surveys, or focus groups, (3) identify priority gaps, inclusion barriers, and candidate use cases, and (4) assess readiness for open-source DPI adoption using a documented scorecard.

Expected Output

Needs assessment report with a stakeholder map, prioritized gaps and use cases, and a DPI readiness scorecard.

→

Expected Outcome

Knowledge: Evidence-based understanding of country-specific needs, inclusion gaps, and readiness for open-source DPI adoption.

→

Expected Impact

National ID authorities and DPI implementers are guided in prioritizing DPI investments and use cases through a published needs assessment report.

Foundational Digital ID

Track 2: Digital ID Establishment **Foundational research**

Intended for partner universities in countries without a digital ID system. Partner universities are expected to (1) analyze the civil registration and identification landscape, including legal and data protection prerequisites, (2) co-design a reference architecture and phased roadmap with the relevant government authority using open-source platforms, (3) develop a sandbox-based POC of enrollment, ID issuance, and authentication (e.g., on the AIT sandbox), and (4) evaluate the POC for feasibility, cost, inclusion, and privacy.

Expected Output		Expected Outcome		Expected Impact
Reference architecture, phased roadmap, and a sandbox-based POC of a foundational digital ID system.	→	Knowledge: Evidence-based lessons on establishing foundational digital ID using open-source DPI in countries without an existing digital ID system.	→	Governments without digital ID are guided in establishing inclusive, vendor-neutral foundational ID systems through a published playbook and roadmap.

Facial Verification and Open-Source PAD

Track 3: Presentation Attack Dataset **Applied research**

Partner universities are expected to build presentation attack datasets that represent their populations, for use in testing the PAD module (Track 4). They are also expected to document and validate their data collection protocol, including how dataset quality is assessed, guidelines on how the dataset should be used, and which evaluation protocol the dataset serves.

Topics for the attack dataset may include, but are not limited to:

- Printed photo attacks
- Digital screen replay attacks (video or image displayed on a device)
- 3D mask attacks
- Partial attacks (e.g., cut-out eyes or mouth region)
- Demographic diversity coverage (age, skin tone, gender)

Expected Output		Expected Outcome		Expected Impact
Dataset, with a documented and validated data collection protocol and usage guidelines.	→	Knowledge: Evidence-based lessons on collecting presentation attack data.	→	The national ID authority and system integrators can test and select PAD solutions against a locally representative presentation attack dataset, ensuring that face verification works reliably for the country's population. Supported by a published data collection playbook.

Facial Verification and Open-Source PAD

Track 4: Facial Verification and Open-Source PAD Model **Applied research**

Partner universities are expected to develop an open-source face verification and Presentation Attack Detection (PAD) module. PAD helps detect attempts to deceive an identity system using a photograph, video, mask, or similar method. They are also expected to benchmark the model, document the total project cost broken down by category (for example, GPU costs), and analyze the model's weaknesses.

Expected Output		Expected Outcome		Expected Impact
Open-source PAD model with benchmark results, a cost breakdown by category, and an analysis of the model's weaknesses.	→	Knowledge: Evidence-based lessons on building face verification and PAD models.	→	The national ID authority has a benchmarked, open-source PAD option to inform its procurement and deployment decisions, reducing reliance on proprietary solutions. Supported by a published PAD development playbook.

Wallets and Verifiable Credentials

Track 5: VC Use Case **Applied research**

Partner universities are expected to research, identify, pilot and evaluate VC use cases for marginalized populations in their country.

Expected Output		Expected Outcome		Expected Impact
Validated POC/MVP: VC use case piloted with a small group of users in their region.	→	Knowledge: analysis of what works and what does not in using open-source digital wallets for remote identity verification for marginalised populations.	→	The national ID authority or relevant government agency is positioned to scale the piloted VC use case, extending remote identity verification to marginalised populations nationwide. Supported by a published implementation playbook.

AI agent for DPI

Track 6: Consent Framework and Trust Architecture **Advanced research**

Partner universities are required to propose (1) consent frameworks, (2) trust architecture, (3) one relevant use case, (4) develop a prototype as a demonstrator of the framework, and (5) evaluate the prototype (framework) with a focus on effectiveness, cost, security, governance, and risks.

Expected Output		Expected Outcome		Expected Impact
Validated and evaluated POC/MVP of the framework.	→	A secure and robust AI agent that operates reliably across various DPI systems and use cases evaluated through a prototype in one relevant DPI use case.	→	National identity authorities and corresponding public institutions are guided in adopting the consent framework and trust architecture for AI agents through a white paper/playbook.