



Digital Innovation Hub of Catalonia

ICFO partners to promote the digital transformation of Catalan SMEs

May 27, 2022

Thursday, 26 May, representatives of the Generalitat, Foment del Treball, PIMEC, Eurecat, CVC, ICFO, i2CAT, Leitat, UPC, Barcelona Supercomputing Center, and IESE Business School met at the Palau de Pedralbes to launch the Digital Innovation Hub de Catalunya ([DIH4CAT](#)). The hub, which aims to **accelerate the incorporation of advanced technology by Catalan companies** and institutions, is a **public-private consortium** promoted by the Department of Business and Labor through ACCIO, the Department of the Vice-Presidency and Digital and Territorial Policies, economic entities as well as technology and learning institutions in Catalonia.

The DIH4CAT is a **regional innovation ecosystem**, coordinated by the main agents supporting digitalization in Catalonia. It aims to meet the challenges of industry, with a special focus on SMEs as well as public administrations, through the testing of advanced technology as a step prior to implementation. **DIH4CAT is set-up as a networked service center- a "one-stop shop"- through which companies and public institutions can acces**

capacity, solutions and technological infrastructures to drive their digital transformation.

The main services DIH4CAT offers to SMEs, start-ups and public entities are

services for testing and experimenting with advanced digital technologies through access to leading technological infrastructures
digital capabilities and advanced technologies
pre-testing technology consulting
specialized technological training
connections to the innovation ecosystem
and advice on finding funding

This initiative will make it easier for Catalan SMEs to carry out tests and trials in the labs and infrastructures of DIH4CAT members before investing to implement them in their businesses. Grants will be offered to more than 100 Catalan SMEs allowing them to carry out proof of concepts, development of prototypes or tests. The technologies they will be able to test will be linked to **3D printing, robotics and advanced manufacturing, supercomputing / quantum computing, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, big data, IoT, 5G and photonics.**

ICFO participates in DIH4CAT as the **leader of the photonics node on behalf of PHOTONCAT**, the Catalan photonics hub, in which ICFO partners with CD6-UPC and SECPhO. Thanks to the complementarity of the capabilities of its members, PHOTONCAT aims to add value to companies at different levels: specific advice and training, development and prototyping, access to infrastructure and new technologies, and links with the local fabric of photonics based companies and solution providers.

Dr Sergi Ferrando, member of ICFO's KTT team and PHOTONCAT manager explains that *the aim is to provide comprehensive orienteering to companies that can benefit from photonics in their innovation. If the required solution cannot be found in Catalonia through DIH4CAT, we will accompany companies to find solutions via linked pan-European initiatives like PhotonHUB EU.*

Following the kick-off meeting, the Vice President of the Catalan Government and Minister of Digital and Territorial Policies, Jordi Puignero, said that *this great nation building project, DIH4CAT, is a new example of the collaborative spirit that exists in Catalonia to promote the vectors of competitiveness of our companies, the connection with Europe and especially the technological and digital transformation.*

The Minister for Business and Labor, Roger Torrent i Ramio, emphasized that *this is a strategic project that brings together the most important technological and knowledge actors in Catalonia, who have and will play a crucial role in promoting the digital transformation of the country's industrial fabric. The DIH will be key for more SMEs to carry*

out advanced digitization processes and will therefore contribute to Catalonia making a leap forward from a technological point of view," he stressed.

DIH4CAT also provides companies with a self-guidance tool to analyze their degree of digital maturity in a fast, easy and agile way. After self-diagnosis [via this link](#), companies can automatically obtain a personalized report with a digital maturity assessment, followed by a set of recommendations and steps to advance the digital transformation. This will be accompanied by the identification of the main resources of interest accessible via the DIH4CAT and the technological nodes which it encompasses.