Objective

D-CENT will accelerate innovation in the use of the Internet to help communities share data and collaborate to address major societal challenges. Despite its huge potential to transform everyday democratic decision making or to enable citizens to shape their own economic destiny, today's Internet is becoming highly centralised. D-CENT will accelerate the development of practical alternatives, through experiments creating useful new tools for direct democracy and economic empowerment, as well as research. It brings together world-class technological designers and academics with communities. D-CENT will create a bottom-up, decentralised, open platform for collective awareness based on integrating already successful open-source codebases. Its first practical experiments will address democratic engagement, building on Europe's largest experiments in direct democracy – the Open Ministry linked into parliament in Finland, and the involvement of the whole population in shaping a new wiki-constitution in Iceland – as well as one of Europe's most dynamic social movements and new political parties, in Spain. These will show how millions of citizens can become engaged in day-to-day deliberation, and decision-making.

Its second cluster of experiments will connect these new approaches to empowerment to economic platforms. Freecoin, a new disruptive digital social currency based on the blockchain, will be deployed in Finland, Iceland and Spain. Freecoin will facilitate the usage and integration of cryptographic blockchain technologies for the social good, creating the building blocks for a sharing economy that links exchange to trust, deliberation, and collective awareness. The component should be easy to deploy and adapt in different scenarios where the function of distributed authentication is crucial to establish bottom-up trust in value circulation and decision-making systems.

D-CENT will provide civil society with immediately useable digital tools for network democracy and bottom-up social innovation. But it will also grow longer-term alternatives to today's highly centralised platforms and power structures.
Coordinator

NESTA
58 VICTORIA EMBANKMENT
EC4Y 0DS LONDON
United Kingdom

EU contribution: EUR 468 162

Activity type: Research Organisations

Administrative contact: Kelly Armstrong
Tel.: +44 0 20 7438 2500
Contact the organisation

Participants

FUNDACIO PER A LA UNIVERSITAT OBERTA DE CATALUNYA
AVENIDA TIBIDABO 39
08035 BARCELONA
Spain

EU contribution: EUR 121 338

Activity type: Higher or Secondary Education Establishments

Administrative contact: Laia Guamis
Tel.: +34934505310
Contact the organisation

FORUM VIRIUM HELSINKI OY
UNIONINKATU 24
00130 HELSINKI
Finland

EU contribution: EUR 211 095

Activity type: Other

Administrative contact: Marja Mattila
Tel.: +358407440067
Contact the organisation
GEIE ERCIM
ROUTE DES LUCIOLES 2004 SOPHIA ANTIPOLIS
06410 BIOT
France
See on map

Activity type: Other

Administrative contact: Philippe Rohou
Tel.: +33 4 9715 5306
Fax: +33 4 9238 7822
Contact the organisation

CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE CNRS
RUE MICHEL ANGE 3
75794 PARIS
France
See on map

Activity type: Research Organisations

Administrative contact: Alain Mangeol
Tel.: +33 1 49 60 41 85
Fax: +33 1 49 60 41 46
Contact the organisation

IMMI ALPJODLEG STOFNUN UM UPPLYSIGA- OG TJANINGARFRELSI*IMMI INTERNATIONAL
MODERN MEDIA INSTITUTE
LAUGAVEGUR 3
101 REYKJAVIK
Iceland
See on map

Activity type: Research Organisations

Administrative contact: Smari McCarthy
Tel.: +354 6622701
Contact the organisation

IBUAR - SAMRADSLYRAEDI SES
VEGMULA 2
108 REYKJAVIK
Iceland
See on map

Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)

Administrative contact: Róbert Bjarnason
Tel.: +354 6944411
Contact the organisation
STICHTING DYNE. ORG
BARENTSZPLEIN 3 3
1013 NJ AMSTERDAM
Netherlands
EU contribution: EUR 212 160

Activity type: Research Organisations
Administrative contact: Denis Roio
Tel.: +31 612628160
Contact the organisation

THOUGHTWORKS LTD
76-78 WARDOUR STREET
W1F 0UR LONDON
United Kingdom
EU contribution: EUR 247 800

Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Administrative contact: Jeremy Gordon
Tel.: +442034370990
Contact the organisation

OPEN KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION LBG
86-90 PAUL STREET
EC2A 4NE LONDON
United Kingdom
EU contribution: EUR 65 040

Activity type: Research Organisations
Administrative contact: Sander Van Der Waal
Tel.: +441223422159
Contact the organisation

NEO INNOVATION EUROPE LTD
TECHCUBE SUMMERHALL
EH9 1 PL EDINBURGH
United Kingdom
EU contribution: EUR 0

Activity type: Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments)
Administrative contact: Daniel Riedel
Tel.: +1 415 295 5326
Contact the organisation
FUNDACIO BARCELONA MEDIA [Participation ended]  Spain
AVENIDA DIAGONAL 177 - planta 9
08018 BARCELONA
Spain
See on map

Activity type: Research Organisations

Administrative contact: Patricia Castillo
Tel.: +34932381400
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 58 830

OPEN KNOWLEDGE FINLAND Ry  Finland
LAPINLAHDENKATU 16
00180 HELSINKI
Finland

Activity type: Other

Administrative contact: Jaakko Korhonen
Tel.: +358503285285
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 65 040

UNIVERSITE PARIS I PANTHEON-SORBONNE  France
Place du Pantheon 12
75231 PARIS
France
See on map

Activity type: Higher or Secondary Education Establishments

Administrative contact: Gisèle Rouet
Tel.: +33144077770
Contact the organisation

EU contribution: EUR 13 980

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