

Press Release

XiA launches its Community of Practice to support Europe's digital health interoperability skills

The XiA - Xpanding Innovative Alliance project is launching its Community of Practice, a new European collaborative space designed to bring together professionals, educators, researchers, public authorities, healthcare organisations, industry representatives and standards communities around one shared objective: strengthening the skills needed to implement interoperable digital health across Europe.

As the European Health Data Space moves from policy ambition to practical implementation, healthcare systems will need more than technical standards. They will need people able to understand, teach, apply, validate and adapt those standards in real organisational settings. The XiA Community of Practice responds to this need by creating a structured but open environment where stakeholders can exchange knowledge, provide feedback, test educational resources and support the uptake of interoperability training across Europe.

The launch of the Community of Practice marks an important milestone for XiA. It reflects the project's ambition to go beyond the production of educational materials and build a living alliance of organisations and individuals committed to preparing Europe's digital health workforce.

"The EHDS is not only about national-level infrastructure. It will require thousands of hospitals, healthcare organisations and software providers to understand and implement interoperable health data in practice," said Henrique Martins, XiA Project Coordinator. "Building the skills needed across this much larger implementation ecosystem is therefore essential. The Community of Practice gives XiA a way to connect its educational work with the organisations and professionals who will ultimately put interoperability into practice."

A practical space to connect education, implementation and policy

The XiA Community of Practice is designed as the collaborative engine of the project. It will connect XiA with the people and organisations expected to use, review, adapt, promote and benefit from its outputs.

Through the Community of Practice, members will be invited to contribute to activities such as stakeholder consultations, feedback sessions, validation of educational components, workshops, webinars, educathons and dissemination actions. The goal is to ensure that XiA outputs remain aligned with real professional needs, national contexts and EHDS implementation priorities.

The Community will support engagement from several stakeholder profiles, including:

- learners and professionals looking to strengthen their interoperability skills;
- educators and training providers interested in using or adapting XiA materials;
- researchers, experts and validators contributing to quality and relevance;
- healthcare organisations and industry actors preparing for EHDS-related transformation;

- public authorities, national ambassadors and multipliers supporting capacity building and uptake.

Participation is designed to be flexible. Some members may join specific consultations or events, while others may take a more active role in reviewing materials, testing training approaches, supporting national engagement or promoting XiA outputs within their own ecosystems.

Expanding the alliance

The launch of the Community of Practice also illustrates the meaning behind the project's name: Xpanding Innovative Alliance. XiA is not only a consortium project. It is becoming a broader European movement around digital health interoperability skills.

The project is welcoming new Associated Partners and strengthening collaboration with organisations able to connect XiA with healthcare, education, industry, standards and national ecosystems.

Recent additions to the XiA alliance include EHTEL – Implementers Advancing Digital Health and Care Transformation, bringing the perspective of digital health implementers and European health and care organisations; the League of Portuguese Against Rheumatic Diseases (LPCDR), strengthening links with patient and professional communities; and ISIS Engineering School, adding further higher-education and engineering expertise. These collaborations illustrate how XiA is expanding beyond its original consortium to connect the organisations that can help test, adapt, disseminate and ultimately reuse interoperability training in real settings.

These new collaborations will help XiA reach more communities, collect more diverse feedback, and support the long-term uptake of training resources beyond the project's initial circle.

Building the skills needed for EHDS readiness

XiA is developing and reusing educational content to support advanced digital health interoperability skills, including micro-content learning blocks, micro-courses, courses and micro-credentials. These resources will help different professional groups understand and apply key interoperability concepts and standards such as HL7 FHIR, LOINC, SNOMED CT, IHE profiles and the European Electronic Health Record Exchange Format.

The Community of Practice will play a central role in this work by helping XiA test, refine and adapt educational content to different organisational contexts. A university, a hospital, a company, a professional association or a national training initiative may all need to use XiA content differently. The CoP will provide the feedback loop needed to make these resources practical, reusable and relevant.

“The XiA Community of Practice is where our educational work meets real implementation needs. Through the Community, we can bring together the people and organisations who will use, teach, test, adapt and promote XiA learning materials, ensuring that they are shaped by practical experience and not developed in isolation,” said Natalia Allegretti, Senior Innovation Projects Manager at Global Health Connector and XiA WP7 Leader. “The kick-off meeting is an important first step in building this feedback loop. By listening to learners, educators, validators, national authorities and implementation actors, XiA can refine its educational content and support its uptake across different organisational and national contexts,” she added.

A trusted learning environment

The XiA Community of Practice is built on openness, inclusiveness, professional integrity, constructive participation and responsible knowledge sharing. A dedicated Code of Conduct supports a trusted

environment where members can exchange experiences, discuss challenges and contribute to the improvement of XiA outputs while respecting confidentiality, intellectual property and diverse professional perspectives.

This trusted environment is essential because interoperability is not only a technical issue. It is a shared challenge involving healthcare professionals, IT teams, educators, managers, policy actors, researchers, vendors and standards experts.

First outcomes of the kick-off meeting

The official launch of the XiA Community of Practice took place online on 26 June 2026. It brought together 71 participants from 23 countries, including healthcare professionals, IT and interoperability specialists, educators, researchers, standards experts, public-sector representatives and other digital health stakeholders.

The exchanges highlighted several recurring needs: addressing uneven interoperability readiness across professions and countries; connecting education to practical healthcare use cases; adapting learning resources to national and organisational contexts; and involving clinicians and other end users alongside technical specialists. Participants also emphasised the value of modular learning resources, professional validation, continuous feedback and cross-sector collaboration as XiA moves from content development towards testing and uptake.

Key take

- **Takeaway 1 - CoP model recognised as relevant and timely:** Participants recognised the Community of Practice as a valuable mechanism to connect education, implementation and policy, ensuring that XiA outputs remain aligned with real stakeholder needs.
- **Takeaway 2 - Education and workforce capacity emerged as the main priority:** Across testimonials and breakout discussions, participants highlighted that the biggest challenge is not technology itself, but the lack of interoperability skills through practical education and continuous professional development, confirming the relevance and timeliness of XiA.
- **Takeaway 3 - Practical, collaborative learning is needed**
Participants emphasised the need for modular resources, real-world use cases, professional validation and continuous feedback to ensure that XiA materials respond to implementation challenges.
- **Takeaway 4 - Cross-sector collaboration is essential**
Participants recognised the CoP as a space to bring together diverse stakeholders to address EHDS implementation needs and to co-create, validate and promote educational resources beyond the project's lifetime.

The discussion confirmed the importance of creating a European space where interoperability skills can be discussed across professions, organisations and countries, and where XiA outputs can be tested against real-world needs.

What comes next

Following the launch, XiA will progressively activate the Community of Practice through targeted consultations, learning activities, national engagement moments, webinars and validation opportunities.

The Community of Practice will also connect with XiA's wider educational and communication activities, including the Hospitals on FHIR webinar series, XiA Open Learning Sessions and the upcoming XiA Educathon in Pisa during the Hospitals on FHIR User Days.

More information about upcoming CoP activities, consultation opportunities and participation pathways will be shared in the coming weeks.

Organisations and professionals interested in digital health interoperability skills, EHDS readiness, training development or educational uptake are invited to join the XiA Community of Practice.

Join the XiA Community of Practice: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/XiA-Join-The-Community-of-Practice>

Visit the XiA website: <https://xia-project.iscte-iul.pt/> / <https://xia.erasmusplus.european-project.com/>

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About XiA

XiA - Xpanding Innovative Alliance is a European Erasmus+ project supporting the development of advanced digital health interoperability skills in preparation for the European Health Data Space. The project brings together universities, healthcare organisations, industry actors, standards communities, public authorities and ecosystem networks to build flexible, recognised and practice-oriented learning pathways for healthcare professionals, IT specialists and other digital health stakeholders.

XiA aims to strengthen Europe's capacity to implement interoperable digital health by developing educational content, supporting skills recognition, testing training approaches in real settings, and building a sustainable Community of Practice around interoperability skills.