



**WHITE-LABEL SHOP FOR DIGITAL
INTELLIGENT ASSISTANCE AND HUMAN-AI
COLLABORATION IN MANUFACTURING**

WASABI 1ST OPEN CALL FOR EXPERIMENTS
Frequently asked questions document



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1 INTRODUCTION

The present document provides a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and answers related to the WASABI Open Call 1. The list of questions is preliminary and the document will be continuously updated in the course of the process.

More information on the Call for Proposals can be found in the Guide for Applicants available on the WASABI submission platform (<https://wasabi.ems-innovalia.org/>).

2 GENERAL QUESTIONS

2.1 What is WASABI?

WASABI aims to provide SMEs with the tools and knowledge to improve workers' capacities and performance, providing advanced user interfaces for continuous augmented hybrid decision-making. Such interfaces assist employees in interacting with complex software, effectively reducing its skill floor. Consequently, humans will find using the software easier, becoming more open to applying it effectively. One of the key technologies in WASABI's solution portfolio is the **digital intelligent assistant (DIA) – a human-like, task-oriented artificial intelligence (AI) with a conversational interface**. WASABI will demonstrate a federated, white-label shop based on PrestaShop – i.e., an acknowledged open-source shop framework – to accelerate the uptake of intelligent digital assistance.

An assistant supports or entirely takes over time-consuming, stressful, or otherwise undesirable activities for the client. A digital assistant (DA) does the same through software for its user(s). WASABI focuses on DAs, that are also conversational agents. A conversational agent is an application that accepts user input in the form of voice or text and provides responses in natural language. Assistants on mobile devices and Smartspeakers with screens allow rich media responses. Besides, conversational designers can build dialogs so that the assistant has one or more personas to interact with various user groups of age, gender, and social, educational, and cultural backgrounds. Figure 1 illustrates the working principle of a digital assistant for the industry.

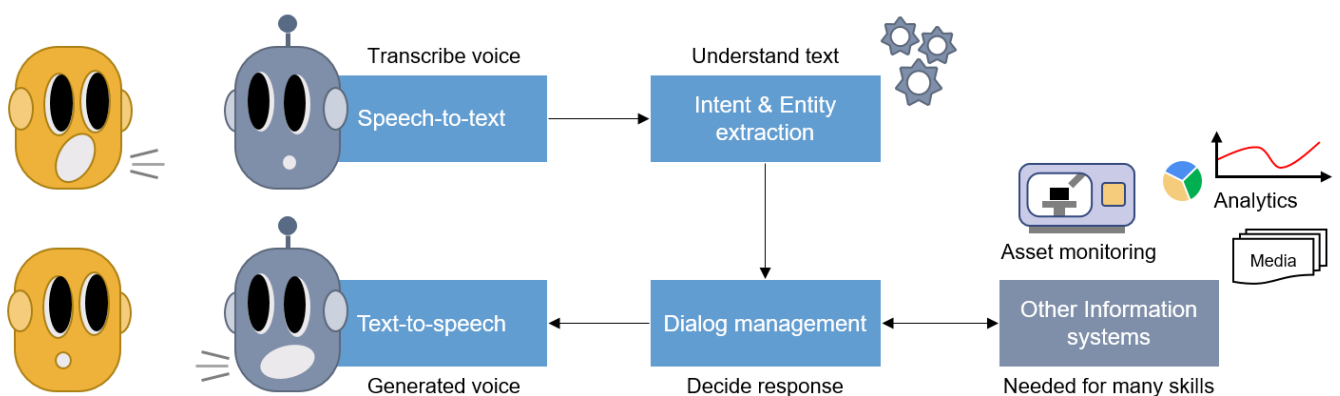


Figure 1. Working principle of a digital assistant for the industry [BIBA – Bremer Institut fuer Produktion und Logistik GmbH (2020)]

WASABI will run **two open calls for experiments that will provide financial support to at least 20 funded experiments lead by SMEs**. These open calls are designed to **support AI-based digital assistance experiments involving SMEs from manufacturing**. Each call will focus on attracting **applicants from all manufacturing sectors** and aims to develop modules for the WASABI web shop, and to expand the WASABI solutions portfolio.

The open calls will strive to improve the **sustainability of processes and products, make industrial processes more agile, and make manufacturing jobs more attractive for workers** through better human-machine interfaces and more intuitive interaction with digital tools.

The present Guide for Applicants details the WASABI open call and how to apply.

3 QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE WASABI 5.0 1ST OPEN CALL

3.1 What is the call for proposals/experiments?

WASABI's Open Call (OC) aims to fund up to **10 application** experiments focused on the development and use of **AI-based assistance for their processes or products**. The proposers' consortiums will **develop** their **WASABI solution** as well as **participate** in the **WASABI's ecosystem**. This solution should include the development of a WASABI module that will be integrated in a WASABI-based digital assistant providing to the WASABI network new application areas. Through the OCs WASABI will enlarge the already existent portfolio of AI-based assistance solutions (notably assistant skills).

3.2 Which is the maximum amount of FSTP allowed per experiment?

The total budget for the Open Call 1 is €1.250.000,00 to be distributed among the selected experiments. Each experiment will be granted 125.000€. Payments will be done on a Lump sum basis.

Nevertheless, a tentative overall budget of each experiment should be included in the proposal and take on account the following:

- 60% of direct eligible costs for SMEs will be funded
- 100% of direct eligible costs for RTOs will be funded

3.3 Who can apply?

The call is open to applications from SMEs (in the manufacturing sector) that will collaborate with a Digital Innovation Hub (DIH)/European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH).

INDIVIDUAL PROPOSAL

A proposal presented by a single organisation; namely an SME.

From a legal standpoint, the eligible beneficiaries are defined hereby:

SMEs: "The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million."



- Extract of Article 2 of the annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC as published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 124, p. 36 of 20 May 2003.

DIHs/EDIHs must be registered in the European Commission's catalogue: <https://european-digital-innovation-hubs.ec.europa.eu/>

Role of the Applicants

To ensure the long-term usability of the project results, WASABI suggests that the proposer is either:

- A technology provider who integrates the WASABI technology into the product. In this case, applicants need to demonstrate the usefulness of the technology in a specific end user. This could be, for example, an ICT solution provider.

or

- A manufacturer. They must have any production machinery where humans currently interact with the machinery traditionally (e.g., keyboard and buttons). Applicants aim to, for instance, improve manufacturing output, improve the quality of the workplace, and increase safety.

A combination of both is possible and welcomed.

3.4 Is subcontracting allowed?

Subcontracting is allowed. It is important to mention the chosen subcontractor and its role in the experiment in the proposal and how the subcontractor will contribute to the end results of the experiment.

Additionally, it needs to be considered that the role of this type of entity is to offer external support to the manufacturing SME in some processes that they cannot accomplish by themselves. In this sense, the subcontractor should not have a proportion higher than the proposal leader, which is the manufacturing SME, as this call addresses primarily manufacturing SMEs and it is a single-applicant type of Open Call (so NOT a consortium).

The amount of subcontracting needs to be stated in section *3.2 Budget of the experiment* of the proposal template.

3.5 Which is the expected duration of each experiment?

The experiments will have a duration of 12 months.

3.6 How to apply?

The proposals are submitted digitally, by the SME, in a single-stage through the Evaluation Management System (EMS). Proposals prepared according to the instructions provided, shall be submitted electronically through the EMS platform. Applicants should follow the steps starting from the WASABI EMS website (<https://wasabi.ems-innovalia.org/>).

3.7 When is the deadline for submission of proposals?

The deadline for the submission of proposals is the 20th September 2024 at 17:00 CEST.



3.8 Can WASABI partners apply to the call?

WASABI partners are not eligible and the application will be disqualified.