



Kim McKayed
CEO & Co-Founder
Protostars AI Software Limited
Dogpatch Labs, Dublin
Ireland

Re: Non-binding letter of support for Protostars proposal under the Digital Europe Programme call topics: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-KEYTECH - Development and Deployment of Advanced Key Technologies, DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-CYBERSEC-02 - Support for Implementation of EU Legislation on Cybersecurity and National Cybersecurity Strategies (2024)

25th March 2025

Dear Kim,

With this letter, I am pleased to express the support of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to the proposed twin EU DEP projects, led Protostars together with its consortia, for submission under the referenced call.

The NCSC is an operational arm of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) responsible for advising and informing Government IT and Critical National Infrastructure providers of current threats and vulnerabilities associated with network and information security. Our core responsibilities encompass facilitating the management of major cyber security incidents, offering guidance and advice on improving cyber security preparedness to businesses and individuals, and nurturing strong international relationships within the global cyber security community for effective information sharing.

The NCSC is a National Competent Authority for the purposes of the NIS2 Directive and also functions as National Cybersecurity Certification Authority within the State. As the proposals aim to develop a capacity-building initiative to deploy advanced key technologies to support the certification stakeholder ecosystem and protect critical infrastructure under NIS2, these projects align with strategic areas of concern and responsibility for the NCSC with respect to demonstration of compliance with EU cyber security regulation and the appropriate safeguarding of Certifications, Standards and Regulations with secure Artificial Intelligence, High Performance Computing and Post-Quantum Computing which is a stated goal of the consortium.

The NCSC has also established the National Cyber Security Coordination and Development Centre (NCC-IE) to support cybersecurity capacity building for the wider cybersecurity sector in the country, as the projects seek to ultimately support the ECCC's vision of achieving common criteria of cybersecurity across member states, the NCSC is fully supportive of project initiatives in this space.

The NCSC believes the proposal meets a significant need to improve cyber security resilience within the EU, and we are happy in principle to provide appropriate support and expertise where possible via





representation on the Advisory Board. We look forward to being briefed on the project on an ongoing basis as it develops.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darran Diskin".

Darran Diskin

Head of Capacity Building and Certification, National Cyber Security Centre