



ELFA selected for Horizon Europe grant to build a local-first, end-to-end encrypted workspace suite

ELFA, short for Encrypted Local-First Applications, has been selected for a Horizon Europe grant from the European Commission under HORIZON CL4-2025-03-HUMAN-16, Area 4, focused on alternative solutions to centralised platforms.

The ELFA consortium has secured €3 million over 3 years to develop a free and open source, self-hostable and federated suite of applications for private workspaces and secure social networking. ELFA is designed so people can keep working offline and sync securely when connectivity is available.

The challenge

Most workplace and social platforms rely on central services and constant connectivity. That creates dependencies on a small number of providers, increases exposure to surveillance and mass data breaches, and makes collaboration fragile during outages or under weak network conditions.

Our approach

ELFA is building an integrated suite where tools work together through deep integrations across calendar, documents, databases, and communication tools.

A typical workflow example is meeting creation. When a meeting is created in the calendar, invitations can be sent automatically, a video call link can be reserved, a side chat can be opened, and a collaborative note document can be created and linked to the event.

ELFA includes a full workspace dimension with core office tools, including a text editor, spreadsheets, email, calendar, chat, and video calls. The suite is designed for consistent use across desktop and mobile.

The consortium will reuse and adapt existing open source software where it makes sense, with attention to modularity and maintainability, and the ability to deploy apps both as part of the suite and as standalone products from the same codebase.

Consortium partners

The ELFA consortium includes 13 partners across Europe:

- NLnet (Coordinator), Stichting NLnet, Netherlands
- NextGraph Association, France
- IronCalc, Germany
- OpenBlocks B.V. (BlockNote), Netherlands

- Ananas Teknik AB (Bana), Sweden
- Ontola B.V. (Atomic), Netherlands
- XWiki (CryptPad), France
- Trey Cordova, Spain
- Ura Design GmbH, Germany
- Danube Tech GmbH, Austria
- 2WEBAPP (XRF), Netherlands

Quote

“ELFA is building a collaboration suite where privacy and resilience are defaults. Local-first design keeps work moving when networks fail, and end-to-end encryption protects users across the full stack.”

– ELFA consortium statement

About ELFA

ELFA is a Horizon Europe funded initiative to develop a local-first, end-to-end encrypted, self-hostable and federated suite of applications for private workspaces and secure social networking. The project supports an ecosystem approach, including planned support for third-party app development and integrations.

Media contact

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ELFA is made possible with financial support from the European Commission's Horizon Europe programme.



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