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DIGICORE Excellence Pathway

Class of 2026

Porto, 2nd November 2026



The Digital Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research

Meeting objective and topics



- **Welcome**
  - DIGICORE Excellence Pathway programme: Objectives
  - Overview of badging levels
- **Class of 2026: results and designations**
  - How the pathway worked in 2026
  - Overview of programme assessment process
- **What's next: Class of 2027**

Digital Excellence Programme – Three goals we set out to achieve



Improve readiness visibility:

We created an assessment programme to help DIGICORE members understand and improve their own digital research readiness, aiming to have a comparable picture of the current maturity level through our members, and secondly, to attract external research partners



Drive improvement:

Precision oncology research is evolving fast, and our members are at very different levels of capability for participating in research, both in terms of the quality and availability of data, as well as the organisational capabilities to use it to generate evidence. Thus, every assessment includes a concrete, prioritised improvement plan



Strengthen DIGICORE:

Build a credible, sponsor-ready network able to deliver high-quality pan-European digital oncology research

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How it worked – the Class of 2026 journey

Completed for the Class of 2026

Who?

Step 1 – Self-assessment

Sites completed the Digital Excellence Programme questionnaire across six assessment areas providing supporting evidence

How?

Step 2 – Evidence review

DIGICORE expert reviewers validated submissions and followed up on gaps

What?

Step 3 – Calibration and designation

Scores calibrated across all sites; designation aligned with the agreed requirements from expert panel

When?

Step 4 – Feedback and improvement plan

Every site receives a written report and a tailored improvement plan

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What was assessed – Six areas, more than just data

6 areas will be assessed over 3 domains:

Assessment domain	Assessment area	Description	Example criteria/ method
Data	Data coverage and format	MEDOC concepts are available and conformed in OMOP 5.4	• Presence of MEDOC concepts • Assessed with DIGICORE onboarding tool
	Data quality and completeness	Data is routinely collected and stored in a structured format, and accurately reflects the clinical record	• % code mapping for MEDOC concepts (DIGICORE onboarding tool) • Patient attrition from feasibility to study
Organisation	Research governance	Ethics approvals are fit for purpose for digital research, and timely	• Routine patient consent • Ethics processes • Time to approval
	Technology infrastructure	Effective and scalable technology infrastructure	• Software (*e.g.* OHDSI stack) • Hardware (*e.g.* dedicated server space)
	Skills and people	Dedicated and skilled resource in place across key capabilities	• Presence of dedicated teams • Training programmes
Performance	Track record (industry and/ or academic)	Demonstrated ability to conduct digital research	• OMOP studies completed • Publications

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Class of 2026 by the numbers

Headlines from the first full cohort

12
assessments completed

11
Countries represented

75%
Centres reached **Silver** or **Gold** maturity

3.1/5
Average readiness score

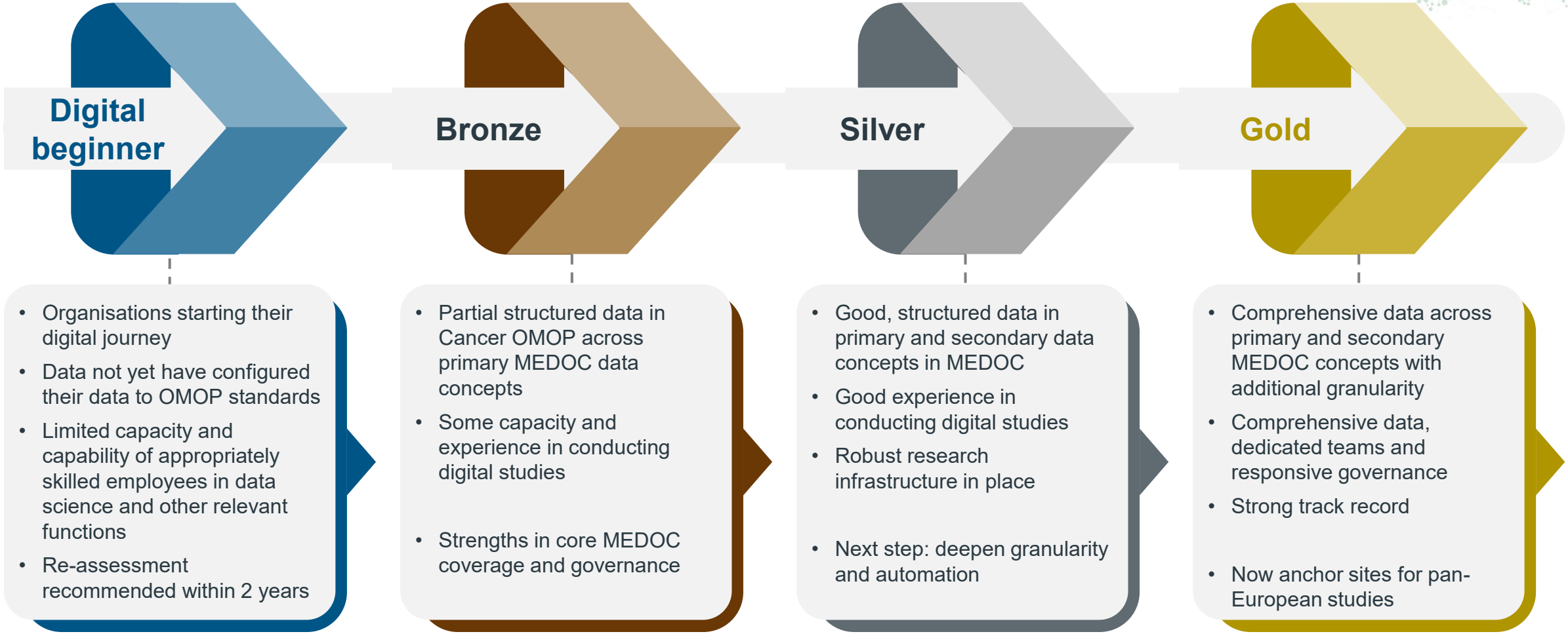
2.5/5
Performance as the weakest domain in the network

- Every site that started the pathway completed it, in a strong signal of **engagement** across the network
- Assessments were completed within the planned four-week window, confirming the process is **scalable**
- **Performance** is where the biggest improvement opportunity is
- Scores spanned three designation levels, validating the badging framework
- **DigiONE's primary challenge is no longer data access, but scalable study execution**

Programme overview



How the programme is structured – Overview of badging levels



DEP focus is not on awarding a badge but on supporting each center in recognising its potential and enhancing its digital research maturity with mentoring and improvement plans

DEP: DIGICORE Excellence Pathway; MEDOC, Minimal Essential Description on Cancer

What we learned across the six assessment areas

Every site leaves with a prioritised improvement plan targeting its two weakest areas

Collective strengths

- Research **governance** is broadly mature, with ethics and approval routes well established at most sites
- Strong clinical **track record**: most sites had run real-world or OMOP studies in the past three years
- High **engagement**: responsiveness to feasibility requests was consistently good

Common gaps

- Secondary **MEDOC** concepts remain largely unstructured, limiting study depth
- **Data science** and OMOP-specific skills are concentrated in a small number of individuals
- **Refresh cadence** of curated datasets is inconsistent across the network

What's next: Class of 2027 and the re-assessment cycle

*A rolling annual programme: a new cohort each year, with the **Class of 2026** re-assessed in 2-4 years*

Open applications
Q1 2027

Activities

- Open Class of 2027 applications across the network
- Run onboarding webinars for new sites
- Confirm expert reviewer capacity

Confirmed Class of 2027 cohort

Assess
Q2 2027

Activities

- Run self-assessments and evidence reviews for the new cohort
- Begin re-assessment of Class of 2026 sites on the 2-4 year cycle
- Track improvement plan progress with mentors

Progress report on 2026 improvement plans

Designate
Q3 2027

Activities

- Calibrate and award Class of 2027 designations
- Promote designated sites to sponsors and partners

Class of 2027 designations awarded in *Connect to win 2028*

Indicative timings — quarters shown are planning guides and will be confirmed with the network ahead of launch

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Self-assessment questionnaire structure and sample questions

Domains	Data	Organisation	Performance
Definition	Assessment of **coverage of data concepts**, **data completeness**, **quality**, and **format**	Assessment of approach to **research governance**, **infrastructures**, and **skilled personnel** to handle data	Assessment of performance linked to use of data, both in terms of **time** to complete studies and **number** of studies conducted
Sample sub-domains	• Data coverage and completeness • Data quality • Data format	• Research governance • Research collaborations • Routine patient consent • Digital research infrastructure • Presence of dedicated teams • Training programmes	• Commercial and academic RWE studies completed • Approval delays • Comprehensiveness of research • Performance review
Sample question	*Which of the following best describes the QC processes being in place at your centre?*	*How are ethics processes for real-world and digital research organised and applied at your centre?*	*Does your centre systematically evaluate, document, and report the performance and impact of its digital and RWE research activities?*

Questions extending the **PRISM framework[1], integrating elements included in various accreditation systems** and input from IQVIA experts. **Question weighting parameters** have been included and **key elements** will be required for centres to achieve a given level (*e.g.*, OMOP for gold)

Source: [1]Albiñana *et al* (2024) doi: 10.1055/s-0044-1788331

Overview of programme assessment process

	Preparation *~4 weeks**	Assessment *~2 weeks**	Designation *~1 week**	Follow-up
Key activities	• Receipt of application • Documentation shared with sites (survey and scripts) • Site briefing (virtual meeting or recording) + follow-up sessions as needed • Sites complete and return documentation within 1 month (survey, output of scripts, supporting docs)	• Review of site documentation by DIGICORE team • Clarification questions to site • Preparation and conduction of online site visit to verify key aspects claimed by site • Initial scoring/ grading vs. criteria	• Review of all information gathered • Further questions to site if needed • Decision on level awarded • Identification of improvement actions • Collation and sharing of final report to site (awarded level and improvement actions)	• Check-in on progress vs improvement actions for Digital beginners, who will have 2 years to reach Bronze • Redesignation process after 3-5 years • Centres can re-apply after 3 years if they want to demonstrate reaching higher level sooner

Aligned with the vision and strategy of DIGICORE

Enabling the delivery of high-quality digital research

Supporting partner organisations' growth over time

Note: *All estimated timings are referred to one centre, while estimated cost is aggregated for 5 sites; both timings and costs are TBC

Now let’s proceed to the ceremony



Bronze Designation

- Maria Skłodowska-Curie National Research Institute of Oncology
- Tartu University Hospital
- Trinity St James Cancer Institute



Silver Designation

- Cliniques universitaires Saint-Luc
- Oslo University Hospital
- Regina Elena National Cancer Institute (IFO)
- San Raffaele Hospital
- Universitätsklinikum Frankfurt
- Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

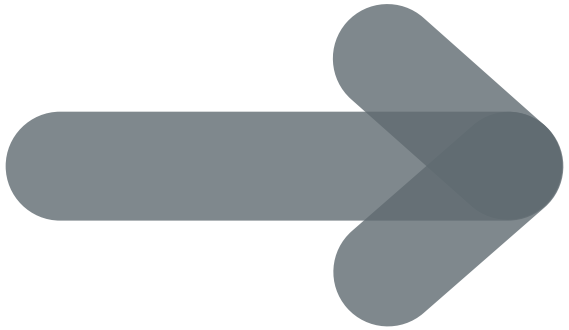


Gold Designation

- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Masaryk Memorial Cancer Institute
- Maastricht University Medical Centre



Next steps



Next steps

- Opening registration for Class 2027