

Artificial intelligence, Data and Robotics ecosystem

<https://adra-e.eu/>

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¹ **PU**: Public; **CO**: Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)



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² **R:** Report, **DEC:** Websites, patent filling, videos; **DEM:** Demonstrator, pilot, prototype; **OTHER:** Software Tools

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Document summary

The second meeting of the Advisory Board of Adra-e allowed an assessment by high-level experts of the activities undertaken from M19-M27 (January – September 2024) of the project and provided insightful recommendations to be further integrated where feasible in the Adra-e activities until the project end.

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1. Introduction

WP7 relates to the management of project Adra-e. As this project is a Coordination and Support action, this WP is central to ensuring the correct implementation of the project and building bridges between WPs to ensure coherence.

T7.2 Advisory Board and Reference Committee is in particular responsible for chairing, facilitate, and support of an Advisory Board.

Deliverable D7.6 Advisory Board recommendations 2 is the second iteration of the recommendations received by the Advisory Board members. The objective of D7.6 is to provide the agenda, overview of the presentations, and outcomes (including recommendations) of the 2nd meeting between Adra-e consortium and the Advisory Board members. This deliverable is the second in a series of three, the third and final of which will be submitted at M36. For the outcomes and recommendations of the first Advisory Board, consult the first deliverable in this series, D7.5.

2. Presentation of Adra-e's Advisory Board

2.1 Advisory Board's mission

The grant agreement states that the Advisory Board “performs an annual general assessment of the progress made by Adra-e and provides recommendations to improve the efficiency and excellence of its activities. It is composed of highly recognized worldwide experts (i.e., not limited to Europe) of the three disciplines, but also on the legal, ethical, entrepreneurial and political domains who have shown scientific openness to another. A global balance regarding gender and geography should be respected. “

2.2 Advisory Board's composition

Adra-e's Advisory Board is composed of 8 high-level experts from around the world. They specialize in different fields from AI, Data and Robotics to economy and ethics.

Name	Organisation
Mr Richard Benjamins	OdiselA ⁴ , Spain
Mr Rodolphe Gelin	Renault Nissan Alliance, France
Ms Yuko Harayama	OECD, Japan
Ms Dongheui Lee	TU Wien, Austria
Ms Juliette Mattioli	Thalès, France
Mr Adegboyega Ojo	Carleton University, Canada
Mr Amedeo Santosuosso	IUSS, University of Pavia, Italy
Ms Carme Torras	CSIC-UPC, Spain

⁴ Mr. Benjamins left Telefonica in March 2024 to co-found the Spanish observatory for ethical and social impacts of AI (OdiselA). He currently serves as CEO at OdiselA and remains a member of the Advisory Board.

3. Recommendations of the Advisory Board

The second online meeting of the Advisory Board took place October 9th, 2024. Five Advisory Board members had indicated their attendance, and three were finally able to attend the online meeting: Ms. Carme Torras, Ms. Yuko Harayama, and Mr. Rodolphe Gelin. All Advisory Board members received the presentations and related documentation by email correspondence on October 11th and were invited to provide their input and recommendations via electronic communication. All task leaders and work package leaders were invited as well as the coordinator who chaired the session.

Agenda:

Time	Item	Presenter
13:00	Welcome and introductions	Marc Schoenauer, Inria
13:05	Adra-e 2024 Highlights (including recommendations from previous AB meeting)	Marc Schoenauer, Inria
Work Package Presentations: upcoming work, expected results until project end (M28-M36)		
13:20	Support the community and the implementation of the SRIDA	Joost Guerts, Inria
13:30	Awareness and Coordination between European ADR Initiatives	Andrey Girenko, DFKI
13:40	ADR Awareness and Trustworthiness Centre	Mohan Timilsina, University of Galway
13:50	Boosting the adoption of AI technology	Maitena Iglesias Diaz, University of Amsterdam
14:00	Standardisation and regulation	Harshvardhan Pandit, Dublin City University
14:10	Discussions and recommendations from reviewers	AB Members
14:55	Wrap-up and meeting end	Marc Schoenauer, Inria

3.1 General recommendations

The objective of the meeting was to gather inputs and feedbacks on the activities carried out in the project from M19-M27, expected results until project end, and open questions and issues presented to the Advisory Board members. The presentations were organized in a way to receive guidance and recommendations on the way forward in order to maximise impact of Adra-e's activities.

The Advisory Board members welcomed the clear presentations provided of the overall objectives and activities of the project. They appreciated the methodology of the activity development, notably related to the SRIDA, roadmapping, and events. However, they felt that the presentations were too focused on what had been done in the past and not enough on future activities, concrete results, and open issues where the Advisory Board could provide helpful recommendations.

They have made specific remarks for the consortium to consider and act upon during the remaining months of the project:

- HPC is still an area of interest to the AB experts. Even if Adra-e is not involved directly in this area, it should indeed continue to be followed closely especially if the European Union expects to be able to compete with the United States of America and China.

- The context changes very quickly in these three fields and probably what is happening today was not imaginable when the proposal was written and the project began. Think about how Adra-e and Adra have taken these new elements into account in the work plan and show us how you evolved in a dynamic way.
- Even if networking isn't the only goal, it is an important objective and it is happening at most of your events and conferences. It allows people who have never interacted with each other to meet, discuss, and start to network this each other. This should be highlighted as an achievement, quantified and qualified rather than simply mentioned or taken for granted.
- An assessment of the work done so far, what really happened on the ground and what the impressions were, would be very beneficial and will help us advise you more accurately. For example, reach out to interested stakeholders and get the following feedback:
 - o What were the reactions of those who participated?
 - o What were your observations?
 - o Once the actions were done, what happened next?
 - o What are the outputs?
 - o What was the benefit to you (the consortium), Adra, the community, and the participants?

As well as recommendations for future meetings to maximize the advice the AB members can provide:

- For future presentations to the Advisory Board, present the results of the main activities or events and the ones you consider to have the most impact. We do not need presentations of each activity within each WP, but the ones that have the most potential for impact or where you could most use advice and recommendations from us as external experts.
- Everyone here agrees that we want to achieve convergence. General statements and abstract ideas do not get to the root of the topic. Next time, provide specific examples: for example conclusions from workshops so that we can provide more useful feedback. What is interesting in your work is not that a meeting or conference took place, but the outcomes of these meetings and conferences and how to apply them to future R&D&I work.
- For the next meeting, proposal to structure the meeting based on the following questions: if Adra-e didn't exist, how would this work be different? What is each one of the three communities doing differently compared to what they did before?

3.2 Specific recommendations

Further to the general recommendations, the meeting was punctuated by specific questions from the consortium to the Advisory Board members to guide the discussions. Diverging slightly from the original agenda, a round of discussion followed each WP presentation. These questions allowed the project partners to receive the following recommendations:

Recommendations related to WP1

1. Question from presentation: How to organize a democratic, but strategic discussion within Adra (i.e. set/select short, medium, long-term objectives)?

Recommendations:

While the Advisory Board members did not have specific answers to this question, they agreed that is important to find a balance between members of the community – academics, research, industry, and policy makers. Already getting them in one room to find common ground and discuss common concerns is a challenge, but once they are there it is beneficial.

Adra would benefit from an assessment of the three communities and above-mentioned stakeholders who have participated to activities and events during the project. Get their input on the

following topics: what do they feel has changed in the communities since Adra was founded, compared to before? Are things being done differently / more openly / better integrated into their own projects and involving people from other communities? Do they see the added value? Getting the opinions now will allow Adra to have a better view on what is working well, what they should keep, and what could be left behind in the remaining months of the Adra-e project.

In future presentations related to the SRIDA, present the main ideas and highlights which are beneficial to Adra and not just that it has been updated each year. Think about where AB members could provide input or direction for future activities.

Recommendations related to WP2

2. WP2 leader DFKI asked for general impressions and recommendations related to the activities including the mapping exercise, the cross-community workshops, and the exhibitions.

Recommendations:

The one-pagers developed at the end of each cross-community workshop (which summarize discussions and future directions where development is needed) should be shared with the Adra Secretary General and used for future iterations of the SRIDA.

The role that the moderator plays in these workshops is crucial as orchestration is needed to lead to convergence, particularly in manufacturing as different communities may have different approaches or points of view.

The challenge for the next period will be to define how to replicate this approach as the project is, by definition, somewhat experimental. Document the format of the events and define best practices and guidelines so that it can be replicated by Adra after the project ends.

Recommendations related to WP3

3. WP3 leader UoG asked the following questions:
 - a. How can the ADR Awareness Centre adapt its resources to address emerging challenges, like generative AI and ethics?
 - b. What key strategies should we focus on to ensure broad adoption and credibility of the AI Trust Label across industries?

The AB members encouraged the Work Package leader UoG to consider how the book publications will contribute to convergence, and how to ensure that it is an outcome which is beneficial to Adra. Individual book chapters without a concrete link maybe not have the desired impact.

They also encouraged UoG to consider writing a version of the book publication for a younger audience: youths and students who are looking for their specialty destination. This could give them an incentive to be open-minded, have an interest in engineering and new technologies in general.

Finally, they agree that the resources of the Awareness Centre should be adapted based on emerging challenges as the AI ecosystem has been transformed. The main change to positioning and the “before” and “after” is that AI is now everywhere, people are no longer specialized and so the Awareness Centre should reflect this and not only be for a specialized, expert audience.

Recommendations related to WP4

4. WP4 leader UvA asked the following questions

- a. How can we involve experts from different backgrounds to create economic and social impact outside the ADR communities?
- b. Do you think that developing further the public-private funding model will help European ADR technologies to compete better in the future?

The experts did not have any initial responses to the questions which were asked but agreed that they were important issues to explore during the remainder of the project and merited further reflection.

Recommendations related to WP5

5. WP leader DCU provided an overview of the restructuring work of the work package related to existing and new tasks and the expected activities until project end. As this is still under work, no questions were specifically raised.

As the focus of WP5 has changed significantly over the past year and will be an integral part of an upcoming amendment, with the inclusion of a new task related to the Adra topic group on delivery of Trustworthy & Explainable AI, Data, & Robotics, the focus of the presentation was less on recommendations and more on describing the future activities.

The AB members thanked the WP5 leaders for their presentation and agree that this way forward with the new task and activities looks promising for Adra's sustainability.

4. Conclusion

The recommendations provided by the Advisory Board members will be taken into account to further improve the work performed by Adra-e. The final Advisory Board meeting is foreseen in June 2025 and will focus on sustainability after the project's end and follow the structure proposed by the AB members, asking the main question: If Adra-e didn't exist, how would this work be different?