#IDSF25: AIT STRENGTHENS AUSTRIAN COMMITMENT TO PEACETECH WITH LAUNCH OF THE PEACETECH ALLIANCE

A human-centric initiative to foster dialogue between peacebuilders and the tech sector in a global context

Vienna, 25.06.2025: At the 4th International Digital Security Forum (IDSF), which took place from June 4 to 6 2025 in Vienna, the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology and Gaia-X Hub Austria launched the **PeaceTech Alliance** – a not-for-profit platform dedicated to making PeaceTech accessible to those who need it most: peacebuilders. The Alliance aims to make PeaceTech more accessible by co-designing data spaces, events, research, and practical tools that strengthen the capacity of peacebuilders—drawing on expertise from across Austria and global networks, and guided by the principles of Gaia-X. The PeaceTech Alliance was presented at **#IDSF25** during the session "Bridging Continents: Human-Centric Data Governance and Data Sovereignty for Peace and Security," which addressed the question of whether data and tools are currently fit to shape the future of peacebuilding and security.

The PeaceTech Alliance will host events, workshops and one-off training sessions, offering peacebuilders valuable insights into how to use technology effectively. More importantly, it will give them a voice in shaping policy and outreach strategies. These strategies will be made open source, helping technology organisations improve their communication and engagement with peacebuilders around the world. The platform will also include blogs and toolkits explaining different types of PeaceTech, what they mean in accessible language, and where to find them. The initiative focuses also on developing the next generation of federated data spaces to build trust through the concept of sovereign data sharing among different public and private sector stakeholders in dedicated, data-driven use cases. This includes the secure exchange of confidential information by adopting the Gaia-X trust framework.

Helmut Leopold, Head of Center for Digital Safety & Security at AIT and chairman of Gaia-X Hub Austria, said: "This project is not-for-profit and open to everyone. We want to create a space where peacebuilders can influence the tech industry – and vice versa. We also aim to build a data space that connects these two sectors, inviting the participants of the PeaceTech Alliance to help shape our direction. The goal is to create something truly fit for purpose and genuinely useful and trustworthy for those working in peace."

A strong emphasis will be placed on human-centric design

"If PeaceTech is not accessible, it's pointless! Tech often ties itself in knots when it comes to outreach and, in the past, has alienated the third sector, e.g. NGOs. That's a real shame, given its potential for capacity building, funding, and simply making our work more agile. When it comes to peacebuilding, it's even more critical. Of course, we have to consider the digital divide – but then

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think about the fact that these are people working in some of the world's most volatile environments, often in tense situations with vulnerable populations, sometimes vulnerable themselves. With PeaceTech, we need to get it right. We want the PeaceTech Alliance to help craft a human narrative for PeaceTech – not just in Austria and the European Union, but globally", **Nathan Coyle**, Senior PeaceTech Advisor at AIT and project lead.

Building on Austria's commitment to neutrality and Vienna's reputation as a global hub for peacebuilding, the project operates on a co-designed model with supporters across Austria, including academia and the third sector. Partners include Universität Innsbruck, University of Graz, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, the Austrian Centre for Peace, and the International Institute for Peace, with international support from the Open Knowledge Foundation.

Philipp Agathonos, Ambassador of Austria to Vietnam, stated: "PeaceTech fits well within our Austrian identity. We have a proud reputation for peace, so it's only natural that we now focus on how technology can support peacebuilding. But we must also look globally – alongside our friends in the European Union – not only to promote PeaceTech, but to encourage other nations to embrace human-centric design and ensure the needs of peacebuilders are truly met."

What's Next for the PeaceTech Alliance
At the beginning of July, the PeaceTech Alliance will appear at the **Austrian Forum for Peace 2025** in Burgenland, where it will chair "The Blueprint: Austria's Vision for PeaceTech." This will include an open workshop and a high-level, closed-door roundtable bringing together Austrian ministries, universities, peacebuilding organisations, and third sector actors to shape a shared national narrative and define collective strategic priorities for PeaceTech. It will then host a Spotlight Session at **The Tech People Want Summit**, organised by the Open Knowledge Foundation, contributing to the global conversation on ethical and inclusive tech for peace. Finally, the Alliance will take to the stage at **Ars Electronica 2025** in Linz, where **Nathan Coyle**, Senior PeaceTech Advisor at AIT, will speak in the main conference programme on this year's festival theme: "PANIC – yes/no."

The PeaceTech Alliance invites institutions, researchers, and peacebuilders to follow its progress at https://www.peacetech-alliance.com/.

About PeaceTech Alliance
Technology holds incredible potential for peacebuilding: spanning from conflict prevention and addressing AI biases to understanding migration and enhancing the capacity of on-ground organisations. However, it also comes with its pitfalls, emphasizing the need for collective vigilance. The PeaceTech Alliance aims to craft narratives on PeaceTech in collaboration with creators and users, complementing projects at the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology. This platform offers practical insights via blogs, podcasts, and toolkits. Additionally, digital projects to support peacebuilders are being developed, enabling them to continue their impactful work in global communities that need them the most.
This initiative strives to make PeaceTech accessible to those who will put it into practice, serves as a platform to champion the individuals dedicated to PeaceTech and digital peacebuilding, and

fosters vibrant communities by uniting experts with on-the-ground practitioners.
https://www.peacetech-alliance.com/

About AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

With more than 1,500 employees, the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology is Austria's largest research and technology organization. The AIT focuses on the research areas of "sustainable and resilient infrastructures", particularly in the fields of energy, transportation and health, as well as the "digital transformation of industry and society", working closely with universities, industry and public institutions. AIT provides research and technological development to realize basic innovations for the next generation of infrastructure related technologies in the fields of Energy, Transport Technologies, Health & Bioresources, Digital Safety & Security, Vision, Automation & Control and Technology Experience. These technological research areas are supplemented by the competence in the area of Innovation Systems & Policy.
Among others, AIT's global perspective is evident in its contributions to peace technology through the PeaceTech Alliance. This international focus aligns perfectly with AIT's motto "Tomorrow Today," as the institute strives to create a better future by addressing the challenges of the present. https://www.ait.ac.at/

About Gaia-X Hub Austria

The Gaia-X Hub Austria serves as the national coordination and knowledge hub for the European Gaia-X initiative, promoting sovereign, interoperable, and human-centric data infrastructures. With a focus on fostering innovation through secure and transparent data ecosystems, the Hub supports the development of domain-specific data spaces that enable trusted collaboration between public institutions, industry, and civil society. In the context of the PeaceTech Alliance, the Gaia-X Hub Austria contributes its expertise in data sovereignty and interoperability, ensuring that the emerging PeaceTech data space aligns with European values and technical standards. By facilitating connections across sectors and borders, the Hub empowers peacebuilders and technology providers to co-create impactful solutions for a more peaceful digital future. https://www.gaia-x.at/

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