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Project Brief – <u>Helix</u>: Solving FASTER[1] and building the first high-speed link between the market and EU governments

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1. Background – Divizend & FASTER

Divizend is the European market leader in the field of withholding tax reclaims. Our clients range from individual investors to some of the largest financial institutions in Europe.

Through our active role in the **Association of Foreign Banks in Germany**, we have direct access to tax decision-makers at both national and international major banks headquartered in Germany and across Europe. We also frequently host events where we can **personally demonstrate** our solutions to key stakeholders and decision-makers.

With the new EU directive **"FASTER"**, Europe is undergoing a paradigm shift in taxation: Automated, digital refunds of foreign withholding taxes using real-time digital certificates of tax residency will become possible—**provided the technological infrastructure is in place**. So far, competing concepts by other market participants **have been disappointing** in terms of architecture.

Our Vision:
We see FASTER not merely as a regulatory requirement but as a unique opportunity to **open, decentralize, and democratize the communication infrastructure** between banks, intermediaries, tax authorities, governments, and citizens. Think of it as building a "SWIFT 2.0"—but open (instead of proprietary protocols), peer-to-peer (instead of centralized), bottom-up, verifiable and open to everyone, not just banks. EU-wide, with global reach. A **data highway for the public administration of the future**, interlinking the market and governments, starting with capital gains.

As we are already leading experts in withholding tax reclaims, some of the largest European financial institutions are **trusting us** that **we will also solve FASTER for them**. We won't sell Helix to them (as Helix won't be a "product" anyway, it's just a protocol), but instead our FASTER reporting module built **on top of Helix**. This is a **once in a lifetime opportunity** to cause systemic infrastructural change **at the root**, namely directly on the **link between market and state**.

We don't aim to develop just yet another proprietary software stack. Instead, through "Project Helix", we aim to create the open source **Helix Protocol**, a protocol for federated, high-speed, maximum security information interchange, usable by everyone, from citizens to the largest banks and custodians. We are working on **making democracy, transparency and efficiency built-in into the new technological foundation of the European Union**.

Of course FASTER will only be the first issue that will be solved through this new communication channel. Once that's running well, i.e. "The roads are built", we can, step by step, tackle more and more digital national and cross-border issues in economy and public administration to sustainably strengthen Commons infrastructure and cause significant cost reductions in all areas of public and private governance due to massive administrative simplifications and automation.

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[1] https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/taxation/business-taxation/faster-directive_en

2. Project Objective

Divizend GmbH aims to **hire a strong developer team** that:

- Lays the groundwork for a **global protocol and network** that can extend beyond FASTER.
- Develops and operates a **decentralized, identity-verified communication & reporting infrastructure** for FASTER.
- Covers everything needed for a FASTER MVP—not just reporting, but also identity verification, messaging, and bidirectional communication.
- Launches as an **integratable module for core banking systems** (e.g., Clearstream Xact).
- Achieves **EU certification & eIDAS/Wallet compatibility** (e.g., Swiyu & EU Wallet).
- Operates as an **independent platform open to states and citizens**.

FASTER Architecture Draft

The operational start depends on a successful application to the **EIC Accelerator Program** of the European Commission, with potential funding exceeding **€1 million**. The EIC application will be submitted by Divizend, but interested individuals are welcome to contribute beforehand.

3. Technical Focus (High-Level)

- **Peer-to-peer messaging:** e.g., libp2p or NATS
- **Verifiable identities:** DID, EU Wallet, Swiyu compatibility
- **Lightweight banking module:** API-compatible, on-prem or containerized
- **Standards compliance:** eIDAS, FASTER, taxonomy-capable mappings
- **IT governance & security:** ISO 27001 certification is mandatory
- **Fully decentralized technologies:** exact ones to be determined, but along the lines of IPFS, Holochain, Hyperledger Fabric, OrbitDB, gun.eco, Pear (Holepunch), etc.

4. Developer Team Sought

We're looking for a crew[2] (ideally 3–6 people) with:

- Deep experience in **network architecture, messaging, DLT/P2P, cryptography**
- Knowledge in **DID, SSI, eIDAS, wallet interoperability** is a plus
- Interest in **MVP-driven development** with high code ownership
- Commitment to **quality & certification goals** (ISO 27001, SOC 2 Type 2), for which Divizend is already certified

6. Next Steps (if interested)

1. Contact **Divizend / CTO Julian Nalenz**
2. Introductory meeting & technical deep dive
3. Optional co-creation of the **EIC application** (May–September 2025)
4. Hiring decision made after EIC approval, prioritizing prior contribution and group cohesion (earliest Q4 2025)
5. MVP development starts

Contact:
 Julian Nalenz – CTO, Divizend
 ✉ julian.nalenz@divizend.com

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[2] https://www.microsolidarity.cc/essays/five-scales-of-microsolidarity#id-3-the-crew