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| The International Teleocmmunication Union - Connecting the World. | **International telecommunication union**  **Telecommunication Standardization Bureau** | |  |
|  | | Geneva, 8 June 2023 | |
| **Ref:** | **TSB Circular 110** TSB Events/GM | **To:**  - Administrations of Member States of the Union;  - ITU-T Sector Members;  - ITU-T Associates;  - ITU Academia  **Copy to:**  - The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Study Groups;  - The Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau;  - The Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau;  - The Director of the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific | |
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| **Subject:** | **Joint ITU/WHO Workshop on “Future of Verifiable Health Credentials Beyond COVID-19”**  **(Seoul, Republic of Korea, 11 September 2023)** | | |
| Dear Sir/Madam,  1 I am pleased to inform you that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are jointly organizing a workshop on the **“Future of Verifiable Health Credentials Beyond COVID-19”** at the Grand Walkerhill Hotel in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 11 September 2023. The Workshop is kindly hosted by the Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea.  The Workshop will be succeeded by the fifth meeting of the [Joint Coordination Activity on Digital COVID-19 Certificates (JCA-DCC)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/dcc/Pages/default.aspx) taking place from 18:30 to 20:00 on the same day at the same venue. Remote participation will be provided for both the Meeting and Workshop. Both will be held in English only.  2 Recently, the WHO announced the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) which began on 30 January 2020. It is, however, still critical to ensure global preparedness for future pandemics and ensure appropriate digital systems and specifications are in place. Verifiable health credentials can aid in pandemic preparedness as they provide a secure and efficient way to authenticate and share individuals' health information, such as vaccination status or test results, facilitating effective disease management and mitigating the spread of infectious diseases. There are ongoing discussions aiming to update the International Health Regulations (IHRs) to facilitate exchange of digitized versions of the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP), representing an example of a verifiable health credential.  Digital COVID-19 certificates have been implemented worldwide based on either the public key infrastructure (PKI) or on distributed ledger technologies (DLTs). They were a means to provide proof of vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic to facilitate safe travel and curb further spread of the virus. Challenges, however, still persist in achieving global interoperability between the different implementations of digital COVID-19 certificates. There is a need to establish interoperability frameworks to ensure seamless verification and acceptance across borders.  Looking beyond COVID-19, there are opportunities to expand verifiable health credentials to cover other diseases, such as yellow fever or Monkeypox. Leveraging the lessons learned from digital COVID-19  certificates, a global trust framework for future verifiable health credentials that enhances healthcare efficiency and enables secure sharing of health information while respecting privacy could be envisioned.  3 This workshop is held in the context of PP-22 Resolution 215 “*Role of telecommunications/ICTs in mitigating global pandemics*”. Its objectives include, but are not limited to:   * giving an overview on underlying technologies for implementing future Verifiable Health Credentials learning from the Digital COVID-19 Certificate; * understanding the current regulatory/governance frameworks and implementations of Digital COVID-19 certificate by countries and regions. * identifying the shape of future Verifiable Health Credentials learning from the Digital COVID-19 Certificate; * understanding how to build a trust framework to ensure interoperability of Verifiable Health Credentials issued globally; * sharing on-going standardization activities on Verifiable Health Credentials including the Digital COVID-19 Certificate among relevant ITU-T study groups and other organizations; * identifying ways forward including recommendations for ITU-T Study Groups and WHO to undertake in this area; and * providing recommendations or advice related to Verifiable Health Credentials on the future of JCA-DCC.   4 Participation in the Workshop is open to ITU Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academic Institutions and to any individual from a country that is a member of ITU who wishes to contribute to the work. Participation is free of charge and open to all. No fellowships will be granted for the Workshop.  5 All relevant Information pertaining to the Workshop including the draft programme will be made available on the event website here: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/Workshops-and-Seminars/2023/0911/Pages/default.aspx>. The event webpage will be updated regularly as more information becomes available. Participants are encouraged to check the webpage periodically for updates.  6 Registration is mandatory for all participants planning to attend the workshop. You are invited to complete the online registration form at: <https://www.itu.int/net4/CRM/xreg/web/Login.aspx?src=Registration&Event=C-00012734> as soon as possible. **Early registration is encouraged for onsite attendance** and, due to limited capacity at the event’s venue, **registration for on-site attendance** is requested to be completed by **21 August 2023 at the latest**.Please note that pre-registration of participants for our events is carried out exclusively online.  7 I would remind you that citizens of some countries are required to obtain a visa in order to enter and spend any time in the Republic of Korea. The visa must be obtained from the office (embassy or consulate) representing the Republic of Korea in your country or, if there is no such office in your country, from the one that is closest to the country of departure. Visa processing and approval may take some time, it is therefore suggested to check directly with the appropriate representation and apply early.  Additional information on visa requirements, hotel accommodation, transportation etc. will be available on the event webpage under the section “**Practical Information**”.  Yours faithfully,  Seizo Onoe   Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau | | | |