Science Europe Position on the Future of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) post-2027

March 2026

The European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) aims to be a cornerstone initiative for advancing FAIR and open research practices across the European Research Area (ERA). It aims to create a trusted, federated environment where researchers across Europe can find, access, share, and reuse research data, tools, and services. Its core objective is to support the transition to open science by making research outputs more accessible, interoperable, and reusable across disciplines and borders.

EOSC has taken on additional relevance in the context of research security and digital sovereignty. By developing a public, European-based infrastructure for research data, EOSC helps ensure that valuable scientific outputs remain under European governance and aligned with European values and regulations. This is particularly pertinent as global competition for data intensifies. This also connects to emerging considerations around artificial intelligence in research.

As the current co-programmed European Partnership under Horizon Europe comes to an end, a sustainable governance and funding model must be established for the 2028-2034 financial programming period (Framework Programme 10, FP10). This position is particularly timely in light of the ongoing discussions and preparatory processes for FP10, including the definition of future European Partnerships and the associated strategic planning and legislative cycle. Early clarity on EOSC's future framework is essential to ensure continuity, avoid disruption, and enable stakeholders to align their investments and commitments accordingly. Without such a model, there is a significant risk of fragmentation, reduced momentum, and loss of trust among research communities and infrastructure providers.

Science Europe supports the continuation of EOSC as a Work Programme-based European Partnership under FP10. This model offers the most appropriate balance of agility, stability, financial ring-fencing, and shared responsibility. Importantly, EOSC is designed to host and enable access to research data across all scientific disciplines and thematic areas, thereby directly supporting Science Europe's core advocacy for inclusiveness across all fields of science. It builds on the current co-programmed structure while strengthening commitment and accountability across all partners.

Science Europe
Rue de la Science 14, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 226 03 00 | Fax: +32 (0)2 226 03 01 | Email: office@scienceeurope.org | www.scienceeurope.org

The Work Programme-based Partnership model, based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the European Union, at least five Member States or Associated Countries, and private entities (except in duly justified cases), represents a pragmatic and sustainable solution. Building on the current co-programmed model, the future Work Programme-based partnership would preserve the tripartite governance of EOSC, bringing together the European Commission on behalf of the European Union, participating countries represented in the current EOSC Steering Board, and the research community represented by the EOSC Association (EOSC-A); while funding through the FP10 Work Programme would provide financial stability, inclusive participation, and enable broad visibility of the uses and benefits of EOSC.

The transition to FP10 offers an important opportunity to consolidate EOSC as a lasting pillar of the ERA, and to safeguard and reinforce European-level investment to build upon the success of the current phase and ensure continuity of services and trust within the research community.

EOSC is more than a technical infrastructure, it is a strategic instrument for strengthening the ERA and contributes to operationalising the 'fifth freedom' - the free circulation of knowledge across Europe. By advancing FAIR data practices and enabling federated access to data, tools, and services, EOSC enhances research quality and reproducibility, facilitates interdisciplinary and cross-border collaboration, supports data-driven innovation, strengthens Europe's global competitiveness, and contributes to societal impact by enabling meaningful engagement with wider society.

EOSC demonstrates that openness and data sovereignty can be mutually reinforcing, enabling data to be shared openly where possible while allowing data providers to retain control and apply appropriate access conditions where necessary. This will become increasingly important as the growing use of artificial intelligence in research and innovation creates the need for trusted, secure, well-governed, and responsibly reusable data. Therefore, the engagement of EU Member States and Associated Countries in EOSC is essential, and a European Partnership the best EU instrument to support this objective.

About Science Europe and its role in EOSC

Science Europe, representing major public research funding and research performing organisations across Europe, is committed to open science as a strategic priority and as a driver of high-quality, collaborative, and societally-engaged research, aligned with our values framework for the organisation of research. It welcomed the development of EOSC from its earliest inception, and has consistently raised awareness and provided support for its member organisations.

At present, 15 Science Europe Members are mandated organisations, members, associate partners or observers of EOSC-A. As a member of the EOSC Executive Board between 2018 and 2020, Science Europe contributed to defining EOSC's vision, core values, types of services and sustainability issues. Science Europe also contributed to EOSC-A's governance framework, by participating in the drafting of the first version of the statutes and by-laws of the association. Moreover, Science Europe supported the development of the first EOSC Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and the Multi-Annual Roadmaps. Science Europe is an Observer Member of EOSC-A.