



Opinion paper on EOSC and commercial partners

By the EOSC Steering Board expert group (E03756)

Independent
Expert
Report



Research and
Innovation

Opinion paper on EOOSC and commercial partners

European Commission
Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
Directorate A — ERA & Innovation
Unit RTD.A.4 — Open Science
Contact Michel Schouppe
Email rtd-eosc@ec.europa.eu
Michel.Schouppe@ec.europa.eu
RTD-PUBLICATIONS@ec.europa.eu

European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

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OPINION PAPER BY THE EOSC STEERING BOARD EXPERT GROUP (E03756) ON EOSC AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

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The EOSC Steering Board expert group ²(EOSC-SB) has initiated an overarching analysis of the main disruptive concepts and practices connected to the construction and future operation of the EOSC. The foreseen benefits of EOSC for European research and innovation require transformative practices in several domains covering from FAIR-by-design data collection technologies to FAIR data and service exploitation skills. The Specific issues were chosen by the Steering Board based on the perceived urgency/priority. Those are addressed individually in Opinion Papers drafted by the Policy sub-group, elaborated by the board, and communicated at tripartite level together with the Statement 'EOSC: the Transverse European Data Space for Science, Research and Innovation'³ to become a living reference for the definition of EOSC policies at European, national, and institutional level.*

1. Background

EOSC is an overarching system that supports research and innovation through serviced access to FAIR data. Service providers and partners contributing to the construction and future operation of EOSC, e.g., through related projects, can be from the public as well as from the private sector. The focus of the EOSC is to become a public good. Key contributions towards construction and future operation of EOSC are expected from public research organizations and services also from the private sector. A concrete example is the possibility for private sector partners to respond to the EOSC procurement that is foreseen to be open for application later in 2022. Also, private sector operators expressed interest in joining the EOSC Association.

The participation of commercial partners in the EOSC is an opportunity that requires careful evaluation of proper rules of engagement and of the related risks. Commercial partners could potentially contribute to the co-creation and performance of open services or be mostly attracted by pre-procurement and procurement processes. On these grounds, it is important that the various infrastructures initiates supporting scientist co-ordinate their rules of participation with EOSC and that a cooperation basis is defined between EOSC, EU-funded Data Spaces and commercially oriented initiatives like GAIA-X.

¹ Contact point for this paper by the EOSC Steering Board Expert Group is RTD-EOSC@ec.europa.eu

² [Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/press_corner/news/2022/eosc-expert-groups)

³ EOSC: the Transverse European Data Space for Science, Research and Innovation – STATEMENT, <https://doi.org/10.2777/140927>

One elementary question for engaging the private sector is: under which rules of participation for-profit operators could become partners in the construction and future operation of EOSC, under which conditions can they reuse EOSC resources, and how to manage the competition created between public and private organisations?

Rules of participation for commercial partners shall be refined with reference to preliminary work carried out by e.g., GO-FAIR, other initiatives and the EOSC-A, and validated by the EOSC governance with respect to general public investment and commercial rules. The following objective and recommendations target the priorities for the short term (2022–2024) towards the general objective of open science as the new normal (see EOSC-SB opinion paper on monitoring open science). Medium (2025–2027) and longer (2028– 2030) term objectives and recommendations will be addressed by the EOSC-SB later.

2. Short term objectives

The MS/AC of the EOSC-SB expert group will undertake all efforts necessary to achieve the following objectives in the period of 2022-2024. By 2024

- 1) a concept for an effective collaboration between all sources of competence and know-how exists that may share the vision of an open science and innovation system benefiting society through research and economy.⁴

3. Recommendations

3.1. Recommendations for implementation on the European level

- 1) Recommends that the EOSC is developed to be a public good. In order to achieve this, the European public research sector shall remain the driving force behind the EOSC construction and future service provision, as unrestricted as possible towards other contributions at for-profit or international levels. This should be seen in the context of the sovereignty of public research partners in the EOSC context (see EOSC-SB opinion paper on FAIR data sovereignty in EOSC).
- 2) Recommends performing a SWOT analysis concerning the participation of commercial partners in EOSC. This SWOT analysis shall be performed by the EOSC tripartite and delivered on time to be taken into account in the context of the drafting of the initial version of the HORIZON-INFRA-2025-EOSC work programme.
- 3) Recommends reviewing the RoP in EOSC in view of the role commercial partners should have in EOSC, both as providers and consumers. Ongoing efforts in this direction, e.g., by the EOSC-Association task force, and the EOSC-Future and EOSC-Focus consortia, shall be reviewed by the EOSC tripartite partnership, whether they are sufficient.

⁴ Inspired by <https://nat.au.dk/en/about-the-faculty/news/show/artikel/aarhus-universitet-og-industrien-aabner-patentfri-legeplads/>

4) Recommends exploring synergies as well as clarifying and formalising the collaborations with the common European Data Spaces and initiatives like GAIA-X. This shall include gathering information about the timeline of the upcoming Data Spaces, their relevance for the EOSC, and what elements relative to the EOSC could be integrated in the regulations in the early draft stages.

3.2. Recommendations for EOSC implementation on national level

5) Recommends that investments at national level provided to commercial partners in fields related to service provision of FAIR data and services, for example in the context of GAIA-X, are co-aligned with the EOSC. This addresses mainly the EOSC SB members, who shall support coherence of investment at the national level.

6) Recommends that EOSC Steering Board delegates facilitate discussion in their own Countries about the role of commercial partners in the provision of EOSC core services. In addition, they should evaluate whether a procurement in the Horizon Europe INFRA-EOSC 2025/2026 work programme is the best tool to continue the EOSC core activities. A common recommendation should then be discussed at the EOSC Steering Board and communicated to the EC before the first draft of the HEINFRA-2025/2026-EOSC work programme is developed.

7) Recommends that the EOSC Steering Board delegates bring the topic 'EOSC and commercial partners' to the discussion in national tripartite events and to communicate national implementation strategies to the EOSC Steering Board, for example on: a) National contributions and commitments to GAIA-X and other commercially oriented initiatives; b) Describe the interface between EOSC and the national GAIA-X hub.

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The EOSC Steering Board expert group (E03756) has developed opinion reflections on selected high-level policy issues. The outcome of these reflections have been formulated as opinion papers on 'EOSC and data literacy', 'EOSC and the commercial partners', 'FAIR data sovereignty in EOSC', and 'Monitoring Open Science'. The papers include objectives and recommendations for the period 2022 to 2024. A selection of key elements from these opinions are highlighted in a joint statement by the expert group called 'EOSC: the Transverse European Data Space for Science, Research and Innovation'. All four papers have collected input from private experts, governmental experts, and the European Commission, and were finally adopted via written procedure in November 2022.

Studies and reports

