



# ESCAPE

European Science Cluster of Astronomy &  
Particle physics ESFRI research Infrastructures

***INFRA-2026-01-EOSC-01***  
***“OSCARS 2”***

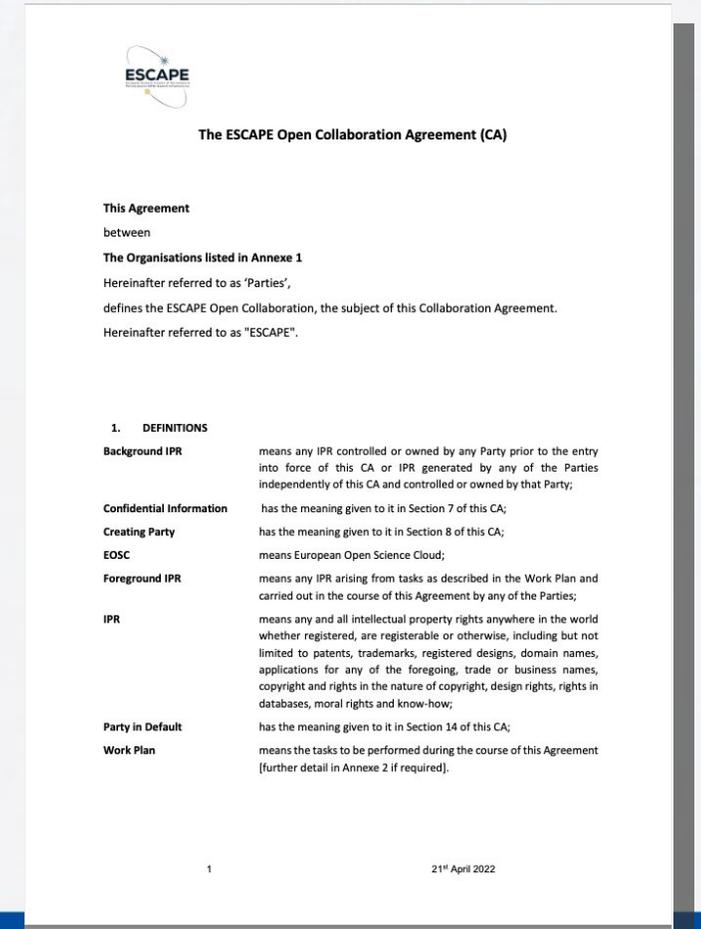
*Alberto Iess*

02/03/2026

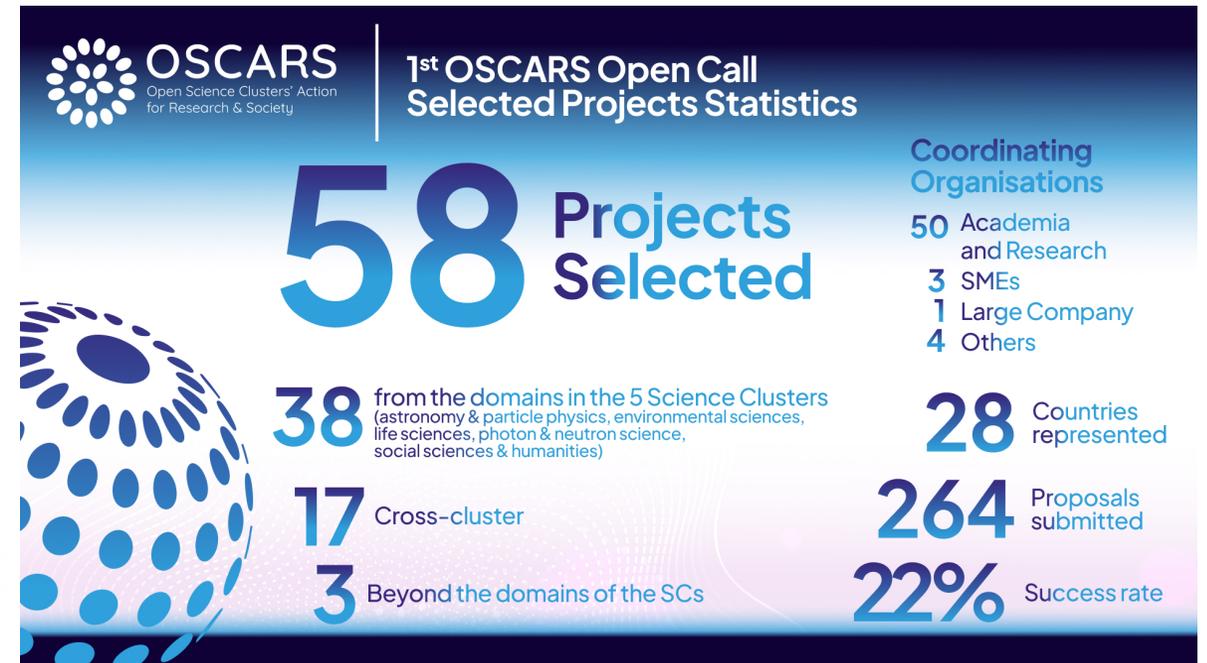
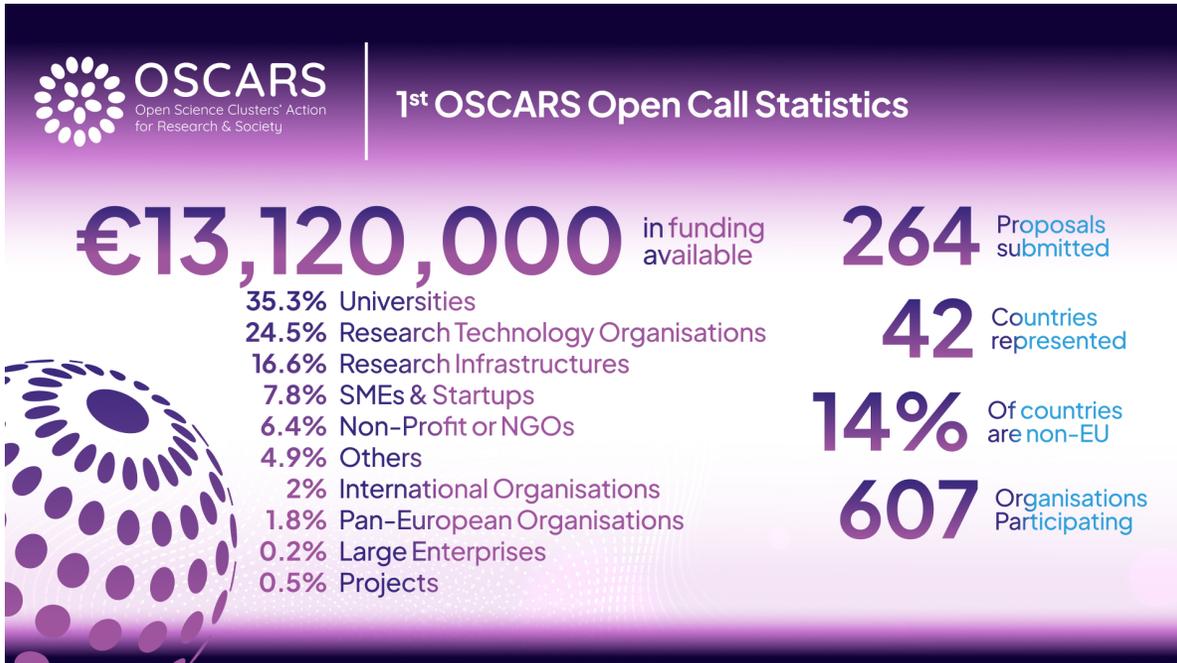


# The ESCAPE Open Collaboration

Since February 2023, ESCAPE has a Collaboration Agreement signed by the Directors of all the partner RIs



<https://projectescape.eu/>

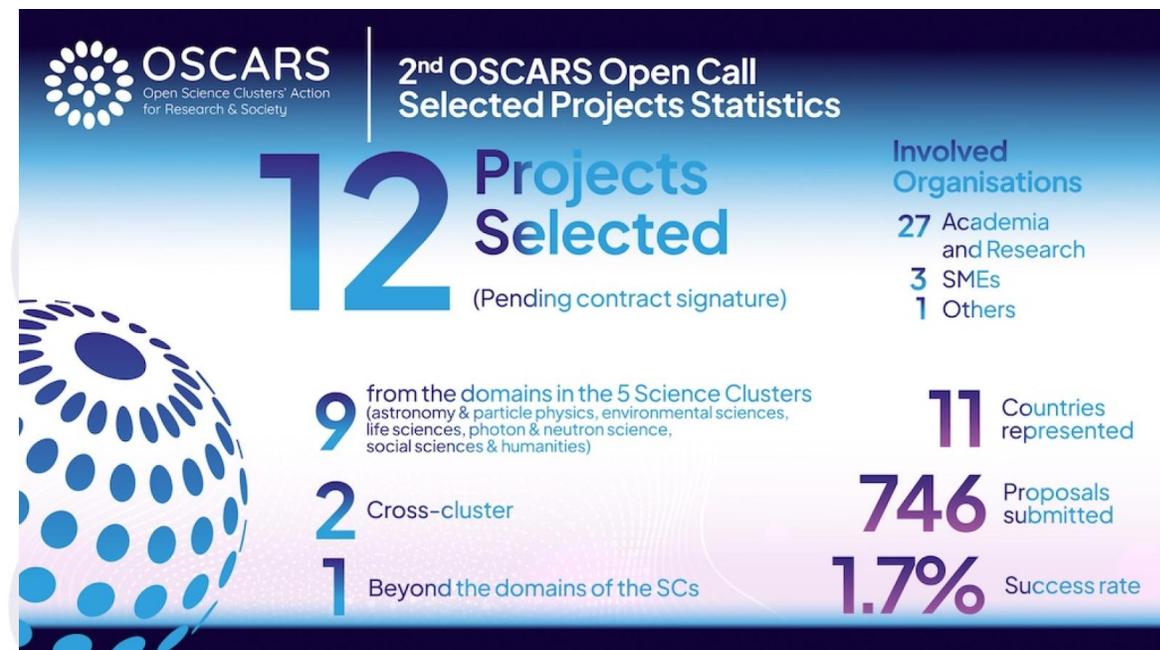
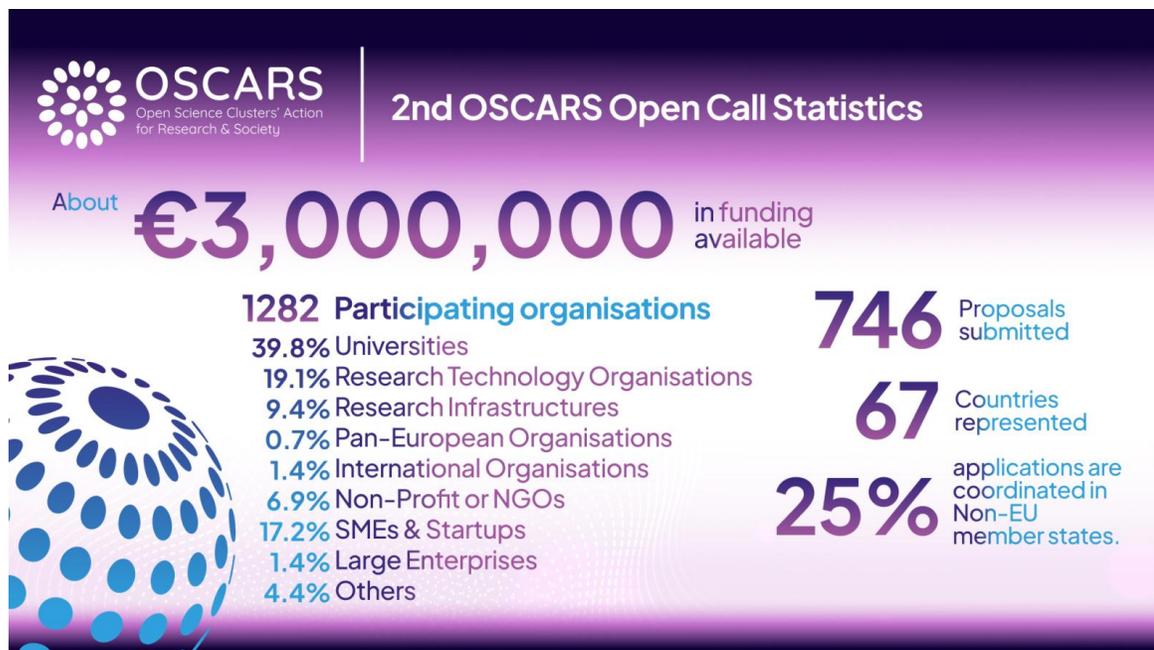


Total funding requested: € 55,548,003.44  
174 Consortia - 90 Mono-beneficiary projects

Total funding available: € 13,120,000.00  
Total spent: € 13,640,457.16

More info at:

<https://www.oscars-project.eu/news/264-proposals-submitted-1st-oscars-open-call>  
<https://oscars-project.eu/news/1st-oscars-open-call-concluded-58-projects-selected>



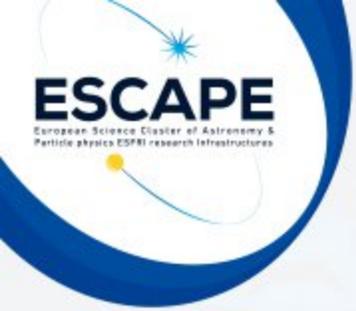
Total funding requested: € 172,725,867.31  
529 Consortia - 217 Mono-beneficiary projects

Total funding available: less than € 3,000,000  
Total spent: € 2,913,194.50

More info at:

<https://oscars-project.eu/news/2nd-oscars-open-call-concluded-12-projects-selected>

<https://oscars-project.eu/news/2nd-oscars-open-call-reflects-great-demand-open-science-funding-0>



# 2026 Horizon Europe calls preparation

## The 5 Science Clusters are:

- ENVRI - Environmental Science
- **ESCAPE - Astronomy and Particle Physics**
- LS RI - Life Science
- PaNOSC - Photon and Neutron Science
- SSHOC - Social Sciences and Humanities



<https://science-clusters.eu/>

- During the last three years, some **Science Clusters (SCLs) statements addressed to high-level stakeholders** concerned the **consolidation of the role of clusters** in the Horizon Europe framework programme. **SCLs to be seen as:**
  - **‘Facilitators, operators and aggregators’** of open/common data services for science and innovation.
  - Able to **reach out more partners** (ESFRI and world-class RIs), **consolidate synergies**, pool other services in a broader dimension and guarantee **coordination among RIs on European policies**, innovation/technology programmes and other (multidisciplinary) sectoral data spaces.
- Consequently, the EC is providing two more opportunities in 2026:
  - **HORIZON-INFRA-2026-01-EOSC-01** that will bring the SCLs to **“OSCARs 2”**.
  - **HORIZON-INFRA-2026-DEV-01-02** allowing us to build a new phase of our collaboration : **“ESCAPE enhance”**.
- ..and further in 2027:
  - **“ESCAPE enhance”** should strongly support and coordinate actions under **HORIZON-INFRA-2027-SERV-01-01** and **HORIZON-INFRA-2027-SERV-01-02**
- Meetings with the EC are currently being planned to discuss the evolution of ESCAPE and other SCLs (e.g. within **FP10**).



# 2026 Horizon Europe calls preparation

*HORIZON-INFRA-2026-01-EOSC-01: Uptake of FAIR data management practices and of EOSC by research communities and research infrastructures (40 MEur).*

*HORIZON-INFRA-2026-DEV-01-02: Consolidation of the research infrastructure landscape – pilots for strategic coordination, synergies and simplified access pathways, by large thematic clusters of pan-European research infrastructures (8 MEur max per project).*

- Both calls were presented in July 2025 during the last ESCAPE Strategy Board meeting
- Individual meetings (September–December 2025) were between GL and each ESCAPE RI partner to gather interests and priorities. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to each ESCAPE member.

Meanwhile:

- **OSCARS** project is facing its **mid-term review**; **EVERSE** project is **exploring new steps**.
- The **EOSC Federation** is **being developed**, through the **deployment of further Nodes** and the discussion about a **new governance by 2027**, between partnership and joint undertaking.
- **Current and future INFRA-EOSC** funding programmes will support the **adoption of federation**.
- **HORIZON-INFRA-2027-01-EOSC-01-cofund** will explore the 50%-50% cofunding between EC and Member states (we need to follow up in every single member state for the benefit of our science).

## Main results / expectations from the questionnaires

### ● About ESCAPE, EOSC and OSCARS 2

- **Consolidation of the Community Competence Centre (CCC)** as a tool for making cross-fertilisation within ESCAPE sustainable and strengthening the specific role of an RI as a technical contributor; willingness to play a role in a distributed configuration. ESCAPE as a central gateway to research standards for nuclear, astrophysics and particle physics individually.
- **Community underrepresented in EOSC.** We need to leverage the first group of EOSC national nodes + the CERN node and move towards a possible implementation or evolution of the existing one towards an ESCAPE node (with some RIs to start with); remain united to support the “physics of the two infinities” by leveraging our networks; further characterise VREs and manage them; engage with Member States that are considering co-funding EOSC in the future.

### ● About “ESCAPE enhance”

- The RIs are interested in participating in coordination missions to extend the ESCAPE programme. Data services remain fundamental. The central gateway is considered necessary. Prioritise user access for standards and science, as well as services for innovation, research and development, and training; finally, support shared technological developments.
- Broad inclusivity in the longer term; strategic for INFRA-SERV-2027 and FP10; take into consideration of the weight and specific needs of nuclear, astronomy and high-energy physics, and general trust in the ESCAPE collaboration for such an ambitious path.



## Current Status :

- **The steering committee of the five SCLs (composed of the directors of the SCLs) have begun working on the OSCARS 2 proposal.**
- **An initial meeting was held in Paris on 23 January 2026.**
- **A second coordination meeting will be held in Seville on 9 March, prior to the OSCARS annual general meeting.**
- **Several individual discussions (between ESCAPE director and each SCL et al.) are ongoing.**



## ACTIVITIES:

**1)** Accelerate FAIR adoption and the contribution to and use of EOSC resources by multiple research communities through **open science projects**.

This activity should be implemented through open calls that provide grants to third parties for **open science projects** through a cascading grant mechanism. The open calls should encourage, where applicable, **cross-RI** and/or **cross-domain** collaborations, **including for data access, use and reuse**.

Open science projects should address questions of **high scientific impact**, adopting **best practices** for FAIR data and service management and **demonstrating their benefits**. Their activities may include developing, annotating, curating and making FAIR high-value datasets, developing direct pipelines to integrate large-scale experimental data in repositories federated in EOSC, operationalising data access for AI-based applications, reusing existing datasets, enhancing existing and developing new vocabularies, data standards, metadata mappings and crosswalks, developing software, tools and services, or supporting open science community building.

They should cover a broad range of (academic and/or industrial) research communities and scientific disciplines, **including those less represented** in the EOSC Federation. They should make use of resources available in the **EOSC Federation** and adopt existing EOSC policies and standards, **where possible**. **Projects should strive to ensure the sustained, beyond the projects' duration, integration, deployment and operation of relevant outcomes in the EOSC Federation.**



# HORIZON-INFRA-2026-01-EOSC-01 (OSCARS 2)

At least EUR 29 million of the EU contribution to this topic should be used in this activity. The financial support to third parties for the open science projects must be provided in the form of grants that should be between EUR 100 000 and 250 000 per grant for a duration of 12 to 24 months. **The consortium shall put in place adequate measures to support the integration of the open science projects' results into the EOSC Federation.** These could include **mentoring, training and any other activities** providing effective linkage to the EOSC Federation and EOSC Nodes, as needed for the specific nature of each project.



## ACTIVITIES:

### 2) Support the **integration of thematic research and RI communities** in the EOSC Federation

**2.1** Coordinating, aligning and networking **existing community-based competence centres** on FAIR and open science practices **developed within the EOSC ecosystem**.

**2.2** Developing **training programmes**, modules and material on FAIR and open science practices tailored to the specific needs of different thematic research communities. This activity should include **feedback mechanisms** to ensure that the training services are responsive to the evolving needs of EOSC user communities.

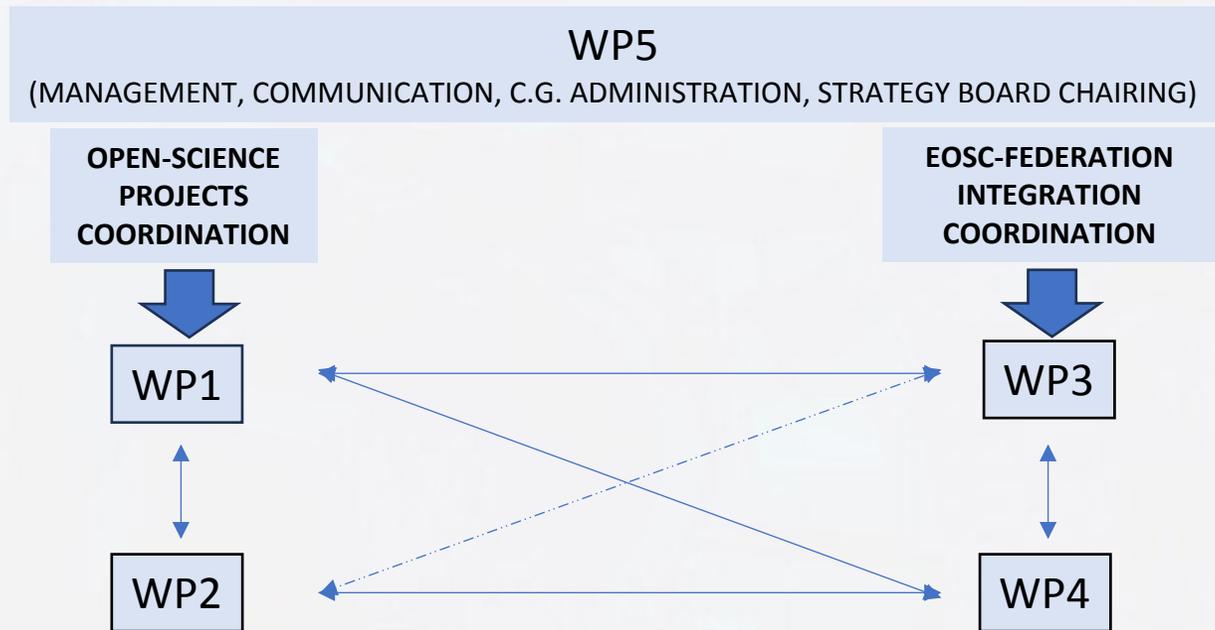
**2.3** Developing frameworks for the **provision and continuous evolution** of **high-impact** services and data repositories **onboarded** to the EOSC Federation, **fostering** interoperability and integration of data and resources from diverse scientific domains and promoting their **sharing** through the EOSC Federation.

**2.4** **Establishing mechanisms** for the integration and long-term sustainable provision of **all relevant outcomes into the EOSC Federation**, as well as for continuous **feedback and adaptation**, ensuring evolving requirements of researchers and RIs are met within the EOSC ecosystem.

**2.5** **Engaging underrepresented thematic research and RI** communities to increase their integration in EOSC.



ACTIVITIES	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5
1 (cascading grants)	X				
2.1 (CCC)				X	
2.2 (Training)		X			
2.3 (EOSC onboarding)			X		
2.4 (sustainability)			X		
2.5 (engagement)	X				
Management					X





## WP1

### Scientific impact and engagement (ACTIVITIES : 1 and 2.5)

Accelerate FAIR adoption and the contribution to and use of EOSC resources by multiple research communities through **open science projects** through a cascading grant mechanism. (1)

**Engaging underrepresented thematic research and RI communities** to increase their integration in EOSC. (2.5)

## WP2

### Strengthening, surveying and conceiving training programmes (ACTIVITIES : 2.2)

**Training programmes** tailored to the specific needs of different thematic research communities and the evolving needs of EOSC user communities.

## WP3

### Enhancing the EOSC Federation's impacts (ACTIVITIES : 2.3 and 2.4)

Developing frameworks for **high-impact** services and data repositories **onboarded** to the EOSC Federation.

**Establishing mechanisms** for the integration and long-term sustainable provision of **all relevant outcomes into the EOSC Federation.**



WP4

Community-based competence centres (ACTIVITIES : 2.1)

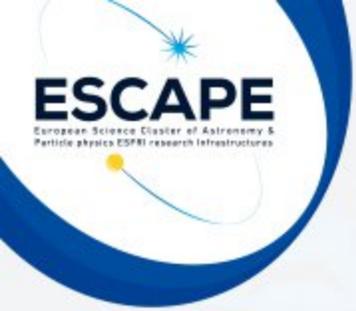
Coordinating, aligning and networking **existing community-based competence centres** on FAIR and open science practices **developed within the EOSC ecosystem.**

WP5

MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION, C.G. ADMINISTRATION



- **Some work to be done with the ESCAPE Executive Board to define priorities and opportunities (for the consolidation part; about 1.9 MEur).**
- **Same for potential cascading grants (CG) (about 5.5 MEur).**
- **Further discussions with the ESCAPE Strategy Board expected to gather suggestions from their own communities and envisage some specific focus for the CG.**
- **EVERSE 2<sup>nd</sup> phase will be included in OSCARS 2 towards a “Knowledge Hub on Software” linked with the 5 CCCs.**
- **Need to reach out new RIs and communities (within ESCAPE).**
- **Conceiving and operating the ESCAPE Node (starting with the partner RIs which have declared their support).**



# DISCUSSIONS Q&A