ESCAPE
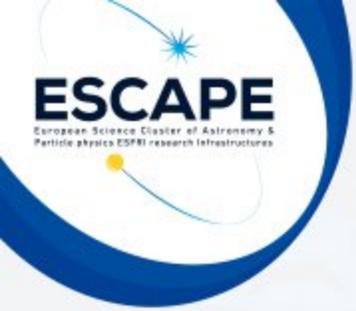
European Science Cluster of Astronomy & Particle physics ESFRI research Infrastructures

INFRA-2026-DEV-01-02

Alberto Iess

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2) <u>HORIZON-INFRA-2026-DEV-01-02</u>: 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).

Proposals should involve, not necessarily as beneficiaries, **ESFRI Landmarks and Projects and/or ERICs** in the domain, **other** research infrastructures that are **international European research organisations and**, where relevant, **well-established networks** of key European research infrastructures **open to external users**. Proposals should elaborate on which key EU priorities and initiatives (such as **Horizon Europe partnerships, missions**) they will consider and **the nature and objectives** of the envisaged **coordination mechanisms or joint activities**.

<u>Scope:</u>

This topic aims at equipping large **thematic clusters of research infrastructures** of European interest with a **policy arm combined with a technical arm**, to increase awareness, findability and accessibility, **better matching user needs.** This thematic clustering is aligned with ESFRI approach: <u>proposals should explicitly state which ESFRI domain they address</u>*. **Proposals should foresee close collaboration across projects under this topic to ensure, where applicable, policy coordination, technical interoperability and other synergies.**

Building on the clusters under Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, on the development of catalogues of services, and on new access pathways and improved services such as under Horizon Europe INFRASERV projects.

*ESFRI domains: 1. Data, Computing and Digital Research Infrastructures; 2. Energy; 3. Environment; 4. Health & Food; **5. Physical Sciences and Engineering**; 6. Social Sciences & Humanities. See ESFRI Landscape Analysis 2024 https://landscape2024.esfri.eu/

Expected Outcome:

1. **Policy** contribution, **impact** and **visibility** of research infrastructures of European interest, by large thematic domain, **to relevant EU policy and priority initiatives**, including beyond research, at national, regional, European and global level.

2. **Improved coordination,** complementarities, and where applicable, interoperability, harmonisation, integration and synergies among research infrastructures within large thematic domains and, where relevant, across domains.

3. **A European portfolio of R&I services of European interest**, supported by a common front page and **few single-entry point access portals**, integrated or interoperable catalogues of R&I services and converging access conditions and selection procedures, strengthening the European landscape of ESFRI-prioritised infrastructures and other world-class research infrastructures by large thematic domains..

4. **Increased awareness, findability and accessibility** of research infrastructures for European researchers and innovators; simplified and adapted access pathways for new needs or new communities of users (e.g. where relevant, multidisciplinary R&I, EU collaborative research projects, EU operational or deployment programmes, public authorities, and industry, including SMEs, startups and scaleups).

Proposals should address all of the following aspects:

1. **Strengthening the representation** of the **research infrastructures cluster, as a single or coordinated voice**, in key EU policy developments and strategic initiatives and contribute to policies in their domain with a research infrastructure component. Coordination with cross-domains fora, such as the ERIC Forum and EIROforum should also be ensured.

2. **Strengthening coordination** among research infrastructures to foster complementarities, interoperability, harmonisation, integration and synergies within the domain, and where relevant with other domains **to address increasingly complex and multidisciplinary science and technology challenges.**

3. **Developing, optimising and connecting catalogues** of research infrastructures services of European interest. Attention is required to new users, notably researchers and innovators from widening countries and candidate countries, industry (including SMEs, startups and scaleups), early-stage career researchers, and non-expert users. **Flexibility to address future needs should be considered.**

4. Developing and implementing **intermediary services, user support, tools** and notably AI assisted research infrastructure services navigation. When relevant, resulting data and digital services should be made accessible through EOSC.

5. **Elaborating and promoting indicators** flagging the strategic relevance of specific research infrastructures services to **key EU R&I priorities and initiatives**, including through common or coordinated impact assessments, and possible validation mechanisms with these initiatives.

Preparatory Phase

Next clusters' calls

To ensure a holistic view from design to implementation of possible access schemes, proposals should ensure strong and continuous collaboration with the cross-domain preparatory action exploring a more integrated and sustainable scheme for access to research infrastructures HORIZON-INFRA-2025-01-DEV-05[22], and the actions supported under topics HORIZON-INFRA-2027-01-SERV-01 and HORIZON-INFRA-2027-01-SERV-02. This collaboration should ensure a common front page to all above actions highlighting the common objectives of EU supported access, the main conditions and requirements, providing

preliminary guidance on access opportunities and directing to the single-entry point portal of each pilot of HORIZON-INFRA-2027-SERV-01-01. The collaboration should also promote simplified access pathways, good practices on call conditions, converging access modalities and selection process, and effective governance of the set of projects acting as an access programme with appropriate advisory bodies.

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❖ We **need to collaborate effectively and reach agreement** among ourselves quickly in order **to optimise** all these **opportunities** in 2026 and 2027, as well as in FP10.

❖ We are called upon to capitalise on our networks and collaborative projects that have worked in the past, while respecting and supporting the ESCAPE cluster.

❖ **ESCAPE** like the other four clusters, is **recognised in the EU** and considered a tool for **cross-fertilisation** and successful **coordination** in the longer term.

DISCUSSIONS
Q&A

Destination INFRASERV - Research infrastructures services to support a healthier future, a global climate and energy vision, a circular and resilient economy, and to advance frontier knowledge (2026-27)				
HORIZON-INFRA-2027-SERV-01-01: Access to research infrastructures, their resources and services: large-scale pilots for more integrated scheme across (sub)domains	RIA	105.00	Around 35.00	3
HORIZON-INFRA-2027-SERV-01-02: Access to research infrastructure services to enable R&I addressing EU priorities and emerging challenges	RIA	35.00	Around 6.00	5

01-02: This topic aims at providing trans-national access (on-site or remote) and/or virtual access to integrated and customised research infrastructure services … Access also includes ad hoc users' training and scientific and technical support

Proposals should include at least one ESFRI Landmark or European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) as beneficiary
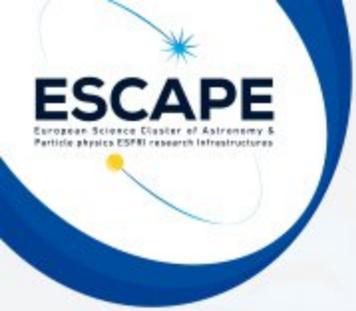
01-01: This topic aims at testing 'access programme like' projects providing trans-national access (on-site or remote) and/or virtual access to integrated and customised research infrastructure installations and services for excellent research, from frontier and curiosity- driven to applied research, offered by a wide range of complementary and interdisciplinary research infrastructures with experience in transnational access. Proposals are expected to address one of the following areas, based on 'ESFRI scientific domains, and must explicitly state which area they address:

Area 1, covering **Physical Sciences and Engineering; Data, Computing and Digital Research Infrastructures**
Area 2, covering Health & Food; Social Sciences and Humanities
Area 3, covering Environment; Energy.

Proposals should include at least two ESFRI Landmark and/or European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) as beneficiary

NEXT PRIORITY FOR ESCAPE

Access includes ad hoc users' training and scientific and technical support (see Specific Features for Research Infrastructures). Additional training courses, including skills for data stewardship, may also be supported. In addition, proposals should better exploit the training potential of successful transnational access user projects by inviting researchers, notably early-stage career researchers, or research infrastructure technicians from widening and candidate countries to team up with selected user groups. Proposals should reserve **sufficient resources for this purpose and should proactively advertise these opportunities.** (which should be arranged after the selection of user projects and have no impact on their evaluation).

Access provision to existing services should be clear in the proposed activities and reflected in **the allocated resources.**

The improvement and development of services can also be supported, provided that the resulting services are offered already under the actions **(short-term R&D)** and that the **long-term sustainability** of such services is ensured.

Data management (and related ethics issues), interoperability, as well as the **connection of digital services (e.g. data services) to the European Open Science Cloud,** should be addressed where relevant. Proposals should take **due account of major European or international initiatives relevant in the domain.** When appropriate, they should foster the use and deployment of (open) global standards.

Proposals should include an **outreach and engagement plan to** actively advertise their services to the research communities, notably from widening countries and candidate countries and to relevant industries, including SMEs and, if applicable, provide dedicated support for the development of research partnerships and collaborations with researchers from widening countries and candidate countries. Proposals are expected to exploit synergies and to ensure complementarity and coherence with other EU grants supporting access provision.

To ensure a holistic view from design to implementation of possible access schemes, proposals should ensure strong and continuous collaboration with the cross-domain preparatory action on access HORIZON-INFRA-2025-01-DEV-05, with the **pilots** under topic HORIZON-INFRA-2026-01-DEV-02, e.g. making use of the catalogues of services, navigation tool and links to key EU initiatives, and with the actions supported under topic HORIZON-INFRA-2027-01-SERV-01.

This collaboration should ensure a common front page to all above actions, set up by one of the pilots, highlighting the common objectives of EU supported access, the main conditions and requirements, providing preliminary guidance on access opportunities and directing to the single-entry point portal of each pilot. The collaboration should also promote, the implementation of simplified access pathways, good practices on call conditions, converging access modalities and selection process, as well as effective governance of the set of projects acting as an access programme with appropriate advisory bodies.

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Keep in mind when working with lump sums:

- No reporting of actual costs, no financial checks and audits

- Following the evaluation of the proposal, lump sum shares are defined per beneficiary and per work package and are fixed in the Grant Agreement

- Pre-financing as usual

- Payments upon completion of work packages at the end of reporting periods

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PILLAR II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

PILLAR III - Innovative Europe

CLUSTER 1: Health	CLUSTER 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies	CLUSTER 4: Digital, Industry & Space	CLUSTER 5: Climate, Energy & Mobility	CLUSTER 6: Food, Bio-economy, Agriculture, Env...	EUROPEAN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS
Innovative Health Initiative	Resilient Cultural Heritage*	Chips (formerly KDT)	Clean Hydrogen	Circular Bio-based Europe	Innovative SMEs
Global Health Partnership	Social Transformations and Resilience*	Smart Networks & Services	Clean Aviation	R&I in the Mediterranean Area (Art. 185)	
Transformation of health systems		High Performance Computing	Single European Sky ATM Research 3	Biodiversa+	EIT
Chemicals risk assessment		European Metrology (Art. 185)	Europe's Rail	Climate Neutral, Sustainable & Productive Blue Economy	InnoEnergy
ERA for Health		AI-Data-Robotics	Connected and Automated Mobility		Climate
Rare diseases		Photonics	Batt4EU	Water4All	Digital
One-Health Anti Microbial Resistance		Made in Europe	Zero-emission waterborne transport	Animal Health & Welfare	Food
Personalised Medicine		Clean steel – low-carbon steelmaking	Zero-emission road transport	Accelerating Farming Systems Transitions	Health
Pandemic Preparedness		Processes4Planet	Built4People	Agriculture of Data	Raw Materials
Brain Health*		Global competitive space systems	Solar Photovoltaics^	Safe and Sustainable Food System	Manufacturing
		Innovative Materials for EU*	Clean Energy Transition	Forests and Forestry for sustainable Future*	Urban Mobility
		Virtual Worlds*	Driving Urban Transitions		Cultural and Creative Industries
		Textiles of the Future*			Water, Marine and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem*
		Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition*			

■ Institutionalised partnerships (Art 185/7)
■ EIT KICs
■ Co-programmed
■ Co-funded

* Under preparation

European Commission

CROSS-PILLARS I AND II

European Open Science Cloud

"ESCAPE enhance"

EXPECTED OUTCOME	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4
1. Policy	X			
2. Improved Coordination	X			
3 Portfolio of R&I services		X		
4 Ris' awareness and access			X	
Project management and communication				X

« ESCAPE enhance » aims at being either :
- the Astro-Particle-Nuclear agreed programme for a larger PSE proposal, including "Analytical Physics RIs' cluster" (LEAPS and LENS ??) (that is our hope),

or:
- an individual proposal by itself (in such a case with a budget pro-rated to the number of ESFRIs and other RIs ?!) and well-established bridges with a LEAPS/LENS's one.