Contribution ID: **106**   Type: **Short Talk**

Reviving Virtual Access to fund data usage in the EOSC Federation?

Wednesday, 2 October 2024 12:00 (15 minutes)

In order to fulfil its "catalysing and leveraging role" in the development of European Research Infrastructures (RIs) and e-Infrastructures, the European Commission (EC) introduced mechanisms in the previous Framework Programme to provide researchers who participated in EC-funded projects with access to European RIs. Access to "depletable" resources, including physical and remote access to facilities, was regulated by Transnational Access (TNA), while access to "non-depletable" resources (like e.g. data) was done via Virtual Access (VA). TNA was restricted to partners in the consortium, while VA could be extended to users outside as well. TNA and VA allowed projects to use money from grants to reimburse providers for the costs incurred in the provision of the service, including support-related costs, and covered also any travel costs of researchers accessing the services. This approach helped pool resources across Europe to "properly address the cost and complexity of new world-class RIs" and ensured "wider and more efficient access to and use of" European RIs. By transferring the money directly to the provider, the EC enabled researchers to use facilities around Europe free at the point of use.

While continued for Destination INFRASERV calls of the current Framework Programme, VA and TNA are not included as eligible costs for projects awarded in Destination INFRAEOSC calls, causing several digital services to become discontinued, and making access by researchers to others difficult due to the lack of funding sources that allow them to pay for their use.

However, demand for access to datasets, data processing applications and other data-related services is expected to continue increasing. Processing, analysis and storing of data carry considerable costs when incurred by researchers outside of their own communities, linked to the infrastructure, maintenance, and operating staff. In the context of the Open Science paradigm, the EC and the EU Member States (EU MS) have agreed that enabling "secondary use" of data is needed aims to provide access to any potential user to all data obtained with public funding. This key ingredient in the "EOSC Federation" put forward by the EC, the EOSC Association and the EU MS is expected to result in a further increase in the costs incurred by RIs, since the additional access to and processing of data by researchers not included in the original user base have in general not been foreseen when planning RIs. Some RIs will therefore face problems to fulfil the requirements placed on them. We argue that a mechanism that replaces VA and TNA is needed in the future FP10 for a successful implementation of EOSC as a federation of "EOSC nodes". The EC and EU MS must agree on a way by which data providers can be reimbursed for the extra costs generated by the "secondary use" of data such that access to data remains essentially free at the point of use for researchers.

In our talk we will evaluate the current situation according to the plans to build the EOSC Federation, and will suggest possible ways forward to be discussed with the audience.

Topic

Data innovations: Business models

Primary author: REY MAZON, Miguel (Graz University of Technology)

Co-authors: ROBERTSON, Dale;   JONG, DE, Franciska (CLARIN ERIC);   PICARD, John (CLARIN-ERIC)

Presenter: ROBERTSON, Dale

Session Classification: Empowering Open Science: EGI Community's Impact on EOSC