



About



Into the EVERSE

New year, new Newsletter. With this second edition we start a series of presenting our Work Packages, first one up is WP2. Have a look at our new collaboration as an opportunity area and check out the latest news from the EOSC world. We wish you a pleasant reading!

EOSC-EVERSE

EVERSE Project



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Sanje Fenkart
Communications Officer



EOSC Symposium 2024: Report

From 21-23 October the 6th EOSC Symposium took place in Germany's capital, Berlin. With more than 400 on-site and around 900 online participants the symposium attracted professionals from all over Europe and beyond who work with open science and FAIR data to discuss their engagements.

The symposium featured an important step towards building the EOSC Federation of Nodes. Since its start in 2017, significant work has been undertaken on conceptualisation, prototyping and planning the future infrastructure for research data and software landscapes in Europe. During the symposium the first EOSC *EU Node* - subcontracted directly by the European Commission - was launched that will serve as a reference Node for an upcoming network of national and thematic nodes. This now marks the transition from planning to the first stage of actual deployment. The EOSC EU Node can be accessed by accredited institutional accounts including GÉANT MyAccessor, EU login, Life Science Login and others which are compatible with the EOSC AAI AARC Framework. Initial services include basic compute facilities for researchers from all scientific

communities, not all of whom have access to such. In time the Federation of Nodes will make multiple scientific datasets and services including software tools, workflows, interoperability and training services available across EOSC.



The first EOSC EU nodes were launched and immediately attracted interest. © Andrew Grauman

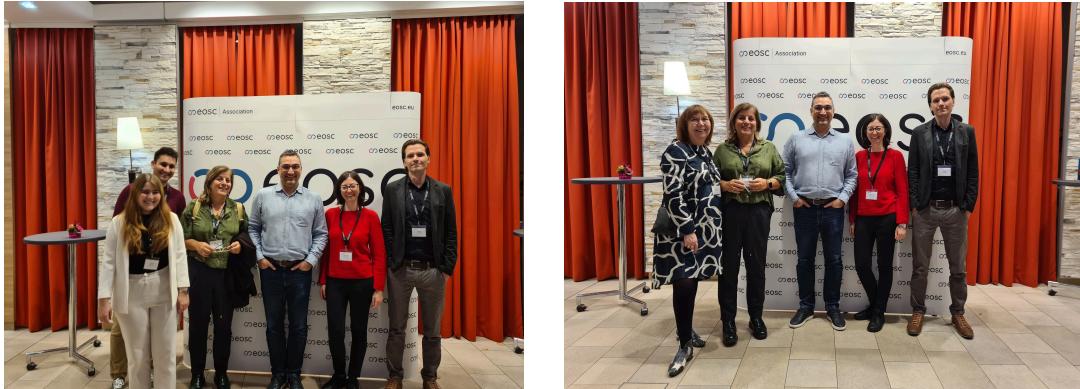
From a project's perspective, EVERSE was actively involved in the unconference session co-organized by Skills4EOSC and OSCARS on "Open Science Competence Centre in the EOSC and beyond". Aimed at examining the roles and definitions of Competence Centres (CC) within the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), participants could discuss their scope, share initiatives, evaluate impacts, and identify challenges and opportunities.

The session started with some quick updates on the Skills4EOSC, OSCARS, EuroScienceGateways and EVERSE projects, setting the stage for the panel discussion. The panel discussion focussed on the following three questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the key functions of a Competence Centre?
2. What should the role of Competence Centres be in the EOSC Federation and nodes?

3. As a representative of your project, and towards (thematic/regional/etc) Competence Centres, what would you need from the other project(s)?

A common theme that emerged was the relation of the Competence Centre to knowledge; essentially a key role of a CC is to ensure that skills, training and competencies on a particular theme are made available to the wider community. This knowledge can range from aspects such as people and training resources, to establishing common standards for alignment across CCs. This perspective can directly complement the concept of the EOSC Node, which primarily encompasses the legal framework for the delivery of services.



The EVERSE members met at the Symposium. ©Private

Throughout the days, several important developments and opportunities relevant to research software quality and the EVERSE project were highlighted. The emphasis on integrating software considerations into the EOSC ecosystem reinforces the importance of EVERSE's work on improving research software quality across European research communities.

Dedicated sessions stressed the critical role of interoperability and metadata standards. The Cross-Domain Interoperability Framework (CDIF) presented practical implementation guidelines that could inform EVERSE's approach to software quality assessment. The symposium highlighted how poor research software quality affects data management, reinforcing the need for EVERSE's work on software quality standards.

The symposium didn't fall short of the current hot topic: artificial intelligence. Especially the intersection of FAIR principles and AI emerged as a key theme. Discussions centered on making datasets "AI-ready" raised important questions about similar requirements for research software. The symposium explored whether investments should focus on improving FAIR implementations or enhancing AI/LLM (large-language models) capabilities - a relevant consideration for EVERSE's software quality framework.

An important discussion point was software aging and its causes, which directly relates to EVERSE's work on software sustainability. The connection between software repositories like Zenodo and Software Heritage was announced as good news for long-term software preservation.

Looking towards the future, the symposium revealed several potential opportunities for EVERSE:

- Collaboration with FAIR2Adapt on machine-interpretable metadata standards
- Integration with emerging EOSC federation services
- Potential presentation of EVERSE's progress at next year's symposium

Overall the event demonstrated strong alignment between EVERSE's objectives and the broader EOSC ecosystem's needs, particularly in establishing software quality standards and supporting research software sustainability.

Written by Fotis Psomopoulos, Giacomo Peru & Sanje Fenkart

Welcome to WP2: Best Practices

WP2

Work Package 2 is looking for community-led best practices that are vital for the development of high-quality research software. Following

a survey to assess existing practices across the community and the launch of the RSQkit, Laura Portell-Silva (Barcelona Supercomputing Centre) Patrick Bos (NLeSC) and Jason Maasen (NLeSC) talk about their work so far.

What got you into WP2?

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Patrick: Because I like a challenge. Explaining best practices and why they make sense is doable. At the Netherlands eScience Center many people do it daily. However, it's not so easy to get people to practice your preachings. Especially when your practices are not an easy to measure "checkbox" item. How do you motivate people to do what's best for them and their research in the long term? This is where I hope we'll find some answers.

What's a best practice to you and how do you define them in the scope of EVERSE?

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Laura: One of the key lessons I've learned since joining EVERSE is that "best" practices, in the strictest sense, don't truly exist. Instead, practices are better understood as the most common ways of accomplishing tasks—typically shaped by experience and proven results. However, a practice that is highly effective in one scientific domain might not translate well to another. This means we can't categorize practices as universally "good" or "bad." Instead, they are standardized approaches that work for the majority within a specific community.

Your main output is the RSQKit. How would you describe it?

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Laura: RSQKit is a platform designed to provide a curated collection of practices, guidelines, and tools focused on research software quality, tailored to meet the specific needs of various research communities. Importantly, the platform not only offers guidelines but also links them to relevant tools and resources that help users implement these recommendations. Additionally, RSQKit incorporates research software quality indicators associated with the tools and pages, enabling users to understand the specific aspects of quality they will address by following the guidelines. This is a community-driven

initiative, meaning the content is created by the communities themselves, based on what they find useful and necessary

What are the challenges when comparing best practices for RSEs from different communities? Where do you find a consensus?

Jason: A major challenge is that the quality requirements may be very different for the various communities. For example, in some of them, like social or medical sciences, ensuring privacy may be a major issue, while in others, like astronomy, this is not relevant at all. Similarly, some communities may care more about precision while others prioritize performance. The consensus lies in the fact that most best practices are generally applicable, is just a matter of assigning more or less priority to them based on the target community.

What's the most surprising thing you discovered during the survey of the communities?

Patrick: I don't think there were very big surprises, but this is not unexpected since the first respondents were from the EVERSE projects, most of whom are research software experts. I'm looking forward to the results from the second survey round in which we will survey a broader population of researchers! Laura: Not sure if surprising, but we could see in the survey that the quality practices were followed more in higher tiers of the 3-tier view of the research software. As you can imagine, the practices were used often for Research Software Infrastructure and were less frequent in prototype tools and analysis code. Another interesting thing that we found is that participants thought that one of the highest impacts of applying software quality practices was receiving funding and increasing FAIRness of the software.

Now that the RSQKit is officially launched, what are the next steps?

Laura: The next steps involve refining the consistency across all pages, adding more content, and determining the best way to integrate software quality indicators with the pages and tools. This will ensure that RSQKit is as useful and accessible as possible for its users. Jason: At the moment the RSQKit is still very much in development. Content-wise there is a lot more information we can

add. For me, a major goal is to combine the many individual snippets of information the RSQKit currently contains into easy to understand and logical best practices that really provide step-by-step guides that help RSEs improve their code.

Which part of your job do you like best?

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Patrick: It is just super fulfilling to be able to talk to all these wonderful people who also happen to be amazing experts. It also feels like we are really in line and achieving something, which is a small miracle, because in software discussions can get quite heated over small details. Laura: I truly enjoy working on projects like EVERSE, where lively discussions take place, and I have the opportunity to learn from people with extensive experience in research software. Jason: Working with all the smart and interesting people in the EVERSE consortium and at partner communities.

What are your hopes for the further development and engagement with the communities?

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Patrick: I hope we can be helpful to the research communities in some way. That whatever comes out of this project will help accelerate or otherwise enhance research outcomes. Whether that will be the best practices through the RSQkit or simply the fact that we built a European community that is aligned around those best practices and disseminates that knowledge more broadly. Jason: The adoption of such practices in a community, and the engagement of the community in teaching and/or improving the best practices by themselves is the ultimate indication of success.

New experts, new opportunities

FAIRCORE4EOSC and EVERSE started a new collaboration together that resulted in a new EOSC-A Opportunity Area Expert

Group. The primary objective of this OA7: Research Software is to address the challenges and opportunities around research software in the context of the EOSC framework.

Click the button to read the full article:

OA7

3-2-1: Lift-off!

Since its official start the EVERSE Network has been growing and many interested individuals have signed up to take part.

Now, we want to bring both sides together: on 18 February, 2025 we invite you to our launch event. Network members will have the opportunity to tell us their expectations and needs from EVERSE, while our experts will show what we offer. Together we will shape a joint way towards a common framework for research software quality, community specific as well as generic.

When: 18 Feb, 11 AM CET

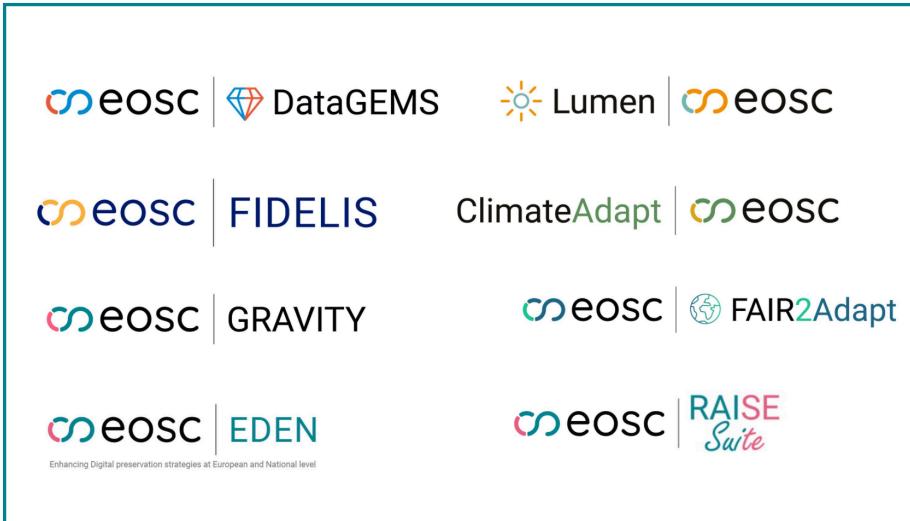
Where: online

Registration

The EOSC family grows

With the start of 2025 nine new INFRAEOSC projects were launched within Horizon Europe. Six projects kicked off right away in January, the other will join throughout the year.

Their topics range from climate change adaptions to EOSC services, either domain specific or agnostic. Click the button below to get to know the new family members.



New projects 2025

Click & Connect

We are on BlueSky! Just as with our other social media handles, we share latest news and quick updates on BlueSky too. While we will for now remain on X/Twitter, this account will slowly be phased out and content will be available on BlueSky, LinkedIn and FOSStodon.

Click the button to follow us on BlueSky:

EVERSE BlueSky

Announcements & Outlook

EOSC Newsletter #43: The first EOSC Association Newsletter of 2025 is out now. Click here to read the latest stories:

EOSC-A News

Our General Assembly is coming to Barcelona from 19-21 March, 2025. Open to all EVERSE members!

GAM25

Posters, talks and more - we are going to deRSE25 in February! Check out the full program

deRSE25

Don't miss our online workshop on evaluating tools and services in RSE on 10th February,

Register

2025! Registration open.

