EIROforum Priority Requests to the European Commission on AI in Science

The offer. EIROforum members operate scientific data, validation environments, demanding use cases and domain expertise that European AI capability depends on. The questions below are about connecting and sustaining what exists, not building something parallel.

The requests

1. **Make intergovernmental research organisations eligible for predictable institutional access.** Establish dedicated, multi-year institutional access mechanisms to EuroHPC and AI Factory resources for EIROs and large-scale research infrastructures, complementing competitive short-cycle project allocations. Access procedures should be simplified and explicitly support long-term scientific programmes. Current short-cycle allocation models are not aligned with the needs of long-term scientific programmes, and existing access procedures remain too complex for routine institutional use.

   Why winnable: Primarily an eligibility and process decision rather than new funding request.

2. **Shift European AI infrastructure access models from resource allocation to service delivery.** Ensure that European AI infrastructures provide integrated access to persistent storage, data movement, inference and model adaptation services, rather than focusing solely on compute allocations. Ensure where possible compatibility and integration between data and research infrastructures (with eduGAIN, MyAccessID, EESSI, CernVM-FS, Rucio, FTS), enabling efficient sharing of data, services and computing resources. Current European access schemes focus primarily on compute allocations rather than operational services. Scientific infrastructures require integrated solutions combining storage, data movement, training, inference, model adaptation and support services. Addressing the gap between access granted and access usable requires changes to programme design at European level.

   Why winnable: largely integration and service design against infrastructure already funded.

3. **Recognise EIROs as strategic users and partners within European AI and digital infrastructure initiatives.** Ensure that organisations operating pan-European scientific infrastructures can participate effectively in the governance and strategic planning of initiatives such as EuroHPC, AI Factories, EOSC and related programmes. Participation frameworks and governance structures are defined at European level. These need to be adapted to facilitate the involvement of research infrastructures and to ensure that their long-term operational requirements are adequately reflected in strategic decisions, service offerings, and access models

   Why winnable: Early involvement of major research infrastructures would help ensure that future investments, services and policies are aligned with real scientific requirements and maximise the uptake and impact of European AI and digital infrastructures.

4. **Establish sustainable funding for scientific data, software and expert personnel.** Recognise data stewardship, scientific software, FAIR data services, repositories, workflows, cybersecurity, and user support, together with research software engineers, data stewards, curators and AI specialists, as eligible long-term operational functions. Support the deployment, operation and maintenance of AI capabilities, including computing resources, software platforms, data services and specialist personnel. Existing funding schemes are predominantly project-based and do not adequately support long-term operational needs

   Why winnable: An eligibility definition within FP10, the European Competitiveness Fund, Euratom and Digital Europe rather than a new instrument.

   Evidence to cite: shared FAIR and analysis services built through time-limited projects, with continuation routes whose funding horizon is unestablished.

5. **Fund the work required to make scientific data AI-ready.** Metadata enrichment, quality control, provenance, licensing and access conditions, reusable workflows, documentation, domain-expert validation, and reference and benchmark datasets. Raw data volume is not a proxy for AI capability.

   Why winnable: a well-defined, modest-cost activity with a clear deliverable, and the precondition for returns on every other AI investment.

6. **Federate domain infrastructures into EOSC, EuroHPC and RAISE rather than consolidating them.** Support interoperable domain nodes, federated identity and access, domain standards, resource accounting and cross-border access, so a researcher moves from domain data through a documented workflow to suitable computing and a validated result without rebuilding access, identity, software and governance each time. Improved interoperability would significantly increase the usability and uptake of existing European digital and computing infrastructures The proposed network of AI competence centres for science should be implemented as a function assigned to existing member capability, not as a new entity.

   Why winnable: Consistent with EIROforum long-standing position on federated e-infrastructures and with the direction of the EOSC Federation initiative. It primarily requires European-level coordination, standards, and integration efforts rather than the creation of new institutions or major new programmes.

7. **Create funding routes for validated AI in discovery and facility operation.** Pilots and scale-up in analysis, experiment steering, scheduling, anomaly detection, predictive maintenance, control, data reduction and surrogate models — conditional on a stated baseline, measurable performance, reproducibility, human oversight and validation proportionate to safety.

   Why winnable: small relative to infrastructure requests, and EIROs supply the demanding validation environments Europe otherwise lacks.

Two cautions

Do not mandate EU-only models. Researchers must be able to use the most suitable models available, including open models developed outside Europe, where European alternatives do not yet provide the required capability. A sovereignty requirement written without this qualification would be one members cannot meet.

Do not fund replication of commercial frontier models. The value for science lies in domain-adapted models and tools that work with scientific data rather than text alone.

What EIROforum undertakes in return

Common definitions and a minimum reporting set for data volumes, curation cost, staffing and AI readiness — without targets, rankings or league tables — so that the asks above rest on comparable evidence.