



Methodology for Applicants and Participating Institutions for “Open Science II Mini-Projects” Calls



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1. Introduction

The Methodology for Applicants and Participating Institutions (the "Methodology") for the "Open Science II Mini-Projects" is binding for all applicants and participating institutions for all "Open Science II Mini-Projects" Calls.

Charles University ("CU") reserves the right to issue further versions of the Methodology that set out the conditions for applicants and Participating Institutions, especially in connection with changes in the methodological environment by the grant provider of the Open Science II project. Applicants and participating institutions are informed about the release of these updates on the website of the EOSC CZ Initiative (<https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>, projects section) and through messages in IS Věda. When preparing and submitting applications for mini-designs, applicants are obliged to comply with the version of the Methodology that is in effect on the day of submission of their application for a mini-project.

2. Definitions of terms used

Amendment

Amendment to the Partnership Cooperation Agreement concluded between the beneficiary and the partners with a financial contribution in the Open Science II project.

European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)

The EOSC is a pan-European initiative that aims to create a unified data infrastructure in Europe accessible to both academia and industry, as well as to public service providers. The basic principle of the EOSC initiative is to make scientific data available in accordance with the principle "open as possible, as closed as necessary" and in accordance with the FAIR principles¹, i.e. making scientific data and metadata Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable.

The strategy of the approach to the implementation of the EOSC initiative in the Czech Republic is based on the framework material Architecture for the Implementation of the EOSC Initiative in the Czech Republic² and also on the outputs of the work of the EOSC Working Groups supervised by the Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the EOSC Initiative in the Czech Republic (CC EOSC).

FAIR principles

See EOSC definitions.

¹ Further information about FAIR Principles is available at <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>.

² Further information at https://www.msmt.cz/uploads/311/Architektura_implementace_EOSC_v_CR.pdf.



IS Věda

Charles University's information system, on which both applications for mini-projects and mini-projects that are being realized are administered.

Mini-project

For the purposes of the Calls, a mini-project is defined as a set of activities that will involve a wider target group in the activities of the Open Science II project, in particular ensuring the FAIRification of research data, metadata and repositories, ensuring standardization/compatibility and the interconnection of systems and other activities necessary for the functioning of the National Data Infrastructure.

National Data Infrastructure (NDI)

Federated distributed data infrastructure for the needs of the EOSC in the Czech Republic built in connection with the European EOSC data infrastructure. It incorporates, in particular, the National Repository Platform, repositories of research and domain clusters and the National Metadata Directory. The design of the NDI concept is based on the framework architecture for the implementation of the EOSC in the Czech Republic and also on the outputs of the work of the EOSC Working Groups supervised by the CC EOSC in the Czech Republic.

NDI Open Access

For the purposes of this document, NDI Open Access means that the NDI infrastructure is made available under clearly formulated non-discriminatory conditions to any researcher, research group or institution, or even to interested members of the public, in accordance with the licensing conditions. There are number of open access models depending on the nature of the repository within the NDI or specific datasets, but in general, all researchers have the opportunity to utilise the NDI infrastructure under clearly defined non-discriminatory conditions. In accordance with the EOSC principles, non-commercial access is free of charge at the level of specific end users/researchers.

Repository

An information system designed for long-term preservation and dissemination of digital objects (research results), i.e. ensuring the storage, protection, integrity, authenticity and accessibility of digital objects in the long term.

EOSC CZ Secretariat

The central administrative and support component for the implementation of the EOSC initiative in the Czech Republic. The main activities provided by the EOSC CZ



Secretariat include the operation and management of the EOSC national information portal in the Czech Republic, logistical and administrative support and professional facilities for cross-cutting, thematic and, if necessary, other special Working Groups for the implementation of EOSC in the Czech Republic ("EOSC CZ WG"), monitoring the status of EOSC implementation in the Czech Republic and the implementation of FAIR data principles, support for coordination, cooperation and collaboration across projects for the implementation of EOSC in the Czech Republic (publication of standards) and support for involvement in international activities in connection with the implementation of EOSC in the EU and cooperation with the National Centre for Information Support for RDI at the National Library of Technology (NLT) within the framework of the development of other components of Open Science in the Czech Republic.

Agreement

Cooperation agreement in research, development and innovation that is to be concluded pursuant to § 8 (3) of the Act on Support for Research and Development between Charles University and the Participating Institution (with the exception of partners with financial contribution in the Open Science II project).

Participating Institution

For the purposes of these Calls and any related documentation, these are research organizations that will be allowed to store and manage data in the NRP environment or connect as additional NDI components. Unless otherwise stated, for the purposes of the entire documentation of the "Open Science II Mini-Projects" Calls, this term includes institutions that implement mini-projects, including the beneficiary and partners with financial contribution in the Open Science II project.

Queue of reserve mini-projects

Applications for collaboration that have passed the evaluation process and have been recommended for signature of an Agreement/Amendment, but which cannot be financed due to a limited financial allocation within a given Call, are included in the queue of reserve mini-projects. For these mini-projects, an Amendment/Agreement may be signed in the event of a supplementary increase in the allocation for a Call or a reduction in the requirement of applicants for mini-projects approved for financing, for the period of validity of the queue of reserve mini-projects. Applicants are informed of the expiration of the validity of the queue of reserve mini-projects by status change of the application for a mini-project in IS Věda and through an internal message. The validity of the queue of reserve mini-projects ends:





- no later than the date after which, taking into account the scheduling of the Call (the latest date for completion of the realization of a mini-project, the minimum duration of the mini-project), it is no longer possible to realize mini-projects under the terms of the Call;
- on the date of announcement of the next Call.

Applicant

For the purposes of these Calls and all related documentation, applicants are defined as entities that are interested in collaboration – that is, research organizations that are interested in participating in the expanding activities of the Open Science II project (including the beneficiary and partners with financial contribution in the Open Science II project) in the form of the realization of mini-projects.

3. Communication between CU and the Applicant/Participating Institution

CU publishes all information on the "Open Science II Mini-Projects" Calls on the website at <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>.

The mode of communication for CU and the Applicant/Participating Institution is through messages in IS Věda.

CU will also provide e-mail consultations, via e-mail only, at: os2_minizamery@ruk.cuni.cz.

E-mail inquiries will be handled on an ongoing basis, and usually no more than five business days from the receipt of the e-mail.

4. Preparation, submission and evaluation of applications for mini-projects

4.1. Announcement of Calls

The Calls for cooperation through "Open Science II Mini-projects" will be announced as an ongoing one-round Call with a two-phase evaluation model (formal and substantive). Applicants submit applications for mini-projects within the deadlines set for individual Calls. One round of submission of applications for mini-projects will be announced in each Call.

The dates of the individual calls will be published on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/projects/open-science-ii/mini-projects-and-opinion-of-the-wg>.





Before submitting an application for a mini-project, all applicants have the opportunity to consult CU staff with specific queries about the Call/application for a mini-project via the e-mail os2_minizamery@ruk.cuni.cz.

4.2. Eligibility of the Applicant/Participating Institution

Eligible applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- A. The applicant is a research organization;
- B. The applicant is not in insolvency proceedings;
- C. The applicant is not in liquidation;
- D. No recovery, tax execution or enforcement proceedings are being conducted against the applicant;
- E. The applicant meets the conditions for being free of debt;
- F. The applicant has no criminal record³;
- G. The applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty⁴;
- H. The applicant has its own funds in place to co-finance the realization of the mini-project and to finance the sustainability of the outputs of the mini-project for the duration of the mini-project (if applicable);

An applicant that has a beneficial owner⁵ must also meet all of the following requirements:

- I. Applicants that are legal entities must be able to describe their ownership structure in accordance with § 14 (3) e) of the Financial Regulations. The ownership structure of the Applicant must not include persons who are subject to restrictions deriving from the Act on the Implementation of International Sanctions and the Sanctions Act;
- J. The membership of the Applicant's statutory body must not include public officials pursuant to § 2 1 c) of the Conflict of Interest Act;
- K. The Applicant is not an entity registered, established or at least 25% controlled by persons registered or established in countries included in the list of jurisdictions that, pursuant to Art. 9 2 of Directive (EE) 2015/849 (the AML Directive) considered to be high-risk third countries or which do not effectively comply with EU or internationally agreed tax standards (so-called tax havens)⁶.

The applicant confirms fulfilment of these requirements by a declaration, through the annex to the application "Declaration of parties interested in cooperation as a Participating Institution" (see Annex no. 2 of this Methodology).

³ Clean criminal record of legal entities and of natural persons (in the statutory body).

⁴ The prohibition of support for undertakings in difficulty does not apply to undertakings that were not in difficulty on 31 December 2019, but only got into difficulty during the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021 (as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic).

⁵ That is, the undertaking is not listed in § 7 of the Act on the Registration of Beneficial Owners as an entity that does not have a beneficial owner.

⁶ The list of tax havens is published on https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/tax-common-eu-list_en#heading_0.





4.3. Partnerships

Partnerships are not permitted in the “Open Science II Mini-Projects” Calls.

4.4. Territorial eligibility of mini-projects

The permitted place of realization of mini-projects is the Czech Republic.

4.5. State Aid

The funds provided are not defined as state aid within the meaning of Art. 107 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Funding will be provided for the implementation of non-commercial activities as defined in para. (20) of the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (2022/C 414/01). Any economic use must be purely incidental in accordance with the provisions of para. (21) of the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation.

The Applicant undertakes to fulfill the obligations deriving from the provisions of Art. 2.1.1 of the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation that prevent the financing of a mini-project from being based on state aid within the meaning of Art. 107 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and that funding provided will be used to perform non-commercial activities as defined in para. (20) of the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation. This commitment of the applicant is enshrined in the mandatory annex to the application for a mini-project "Declaration of applicants for cooperation in the role of a participating institution".

4.6. Binding documentation

The Applicant/Participating Institution is obliged to follow this Methodology (including its annexes) when preparing an application for a mini-project for the relevant Open Science II Mini-Projects Call. The Applicant/Participating Institution must also follow the rules described in Chapter 8.2.1. of the Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries ("RAB") – general and specific part and rules concerning publicity according to Chapter 7.7. of the Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries – general section relevant to the ERDF. Both documents are available here: https://opjak.cz/vyzvy/vyzva-c-02_24_030-open-science-ii/#dokumenty. When preparing an application for a mini-project, the Applicant/Participating Institution must comply with the versions that are valid and binding for the Open Science II project at the time of submission of the application, and the versions that are valid and binding for the Open Science II project at the time of realization of the mini-project.

In the event that the aforementioned binding documentation for the Open Science II project changes during the implementation of the mini-project, all applicants and institutions involved will be informed about this change through IS Věda and on the



website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>. In the event that these changes have an impact on the Agreements/Amendments at the time of realization of the mini-projects, such changes will be enshrined in the amendment to the Agreement/Amendment to the Amendment. In the event that the Participating Institution does not agree with the change, it has the right to withdraw from the realization of the mini-project. Such withdrawal from the realization of a mini-project is then considered as a failure to fulfill the output of the mini-project, with all the consequences for the participating institution (see Chapter 7).

4.7. Eligibility of activities within mini-projects

For **Call No. 1 Open Science II Mini-Projects**, the eligible activity is the creation of outputs that follow the planned outputs and/or supported activities of the Open Science II project and substantially expand/supplement the planned outputs and/or supported activities of the project. These outputs have a high level of preparedness and have been discussed by the EOSC Initiative community in the Czech Republic.

For **Call No. 2 Open Science II Mini-Projects – Open Call**, the eligible activity is the creation of the output(s) necessary to ensure a data-oriented research environment on the part of the applicant for the mini-project.

The outputs of the mini-projects of all Calls listed above must meet all of the following criteria:

- I. Mini-projects must be created for one or more of the following thematic/domain clusters:
 - ✓ Bio/Health/Food
 - ✓ Material Sciences and Technology;
 - ✓ Data Management for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning;
 - ✓ Social Sciences;
 - ✓ Physical Sciences;
 - ✓ Humanities and Arts;
 - ✓ Environmental Sciences;
 - ✓ Sensitive Data.
- II. Every output must correspond to exactly one output type from the Catalogue of Outputs (output specification column, see Annex 2 of the Call)
- III. Every output must:
 - ✓ develop or respond to the requirements of research and domain EOSC communities and
 - ✓ build on the outputs of previous projects and activities of the EOSC CZ initiative and thus meet the requirements of the NDI.





NDI requirements are defined in the following documents:

- a. NDI architecture: https://www.eosc.cz/media/3517655/eosc_architektura-implementation.pdf
- b. Conditions for creating new and modifying existing repositories:
<https://www.eosc.cz/media/4023899/conditions-nrp.pdf>

Information about the planned outputs of the project is published at: <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>, projects section, Open Science II.

Information on the activities supported within the Open Science II project is published at the same location.

4.8. Preparation of applications for a mini-project

Applications for mini-projects are prepared in IS Věda. IS Věda can be accessed at <https://is.cuni.cz/veda>.

We recommend that you **register in IS Věda for the first time as soon as possible after the publication of the Call/Call announcement**. The procedure for registration in IS Věda is described in the "IS Věda Manual for Applicants for Open Science II Mini-Project Calls", which is attached as an annex to the Call.

The Applicant is obliged to submit the mandatory annexes together with the application for a mini-project via IS Věda. An overview of these annexes is provided in Chapter 5.6.

Applicants are obliged to submit a **positive** opinion of the domain/thematic Working Group of the EOSC CZ Initiative with their application for a mini-project. Details of this process are provided in Chapter 4.8.1.

4.8.1. Opinion of the domain/thematic EOSC CZ WG – mandatory annex to the application for a mini-project

Applicants assign the planned output(s) to the relevant domain/thematic cluster in the "Request for an Opinion of the EOSC CZ WG" form (Annex no. 5 of this Methodology). The output should primarily be assigned to a single domain/thematic cluster; however, the Calls do not exclude outputs that are created for multiple domain/thematic clusters. In addition, the applicant assigns the output to exactly one output type from the Catalogue of Outputs (Output Specification column, see annex of the Call)

In the textual part of the form, the Applicant describes how the output meets NDI requirements. Applicants describe the planned output – what will be created. The description must also show how the planned output(s) of the mini-project develops or responds to the requirements of the research and domain EOSC communities and builds on the outputs of previous projects and activities of the EOSC CZ initiative. The Applicant must provide a proposal and a brief description of the criteria for the





functionality or scope of the planned output, which will be formulated in terms of specifying the general characteristics of type outputs in the Catalogue of Outputs (annex of the Call) in relation to the planned output. In the event that the Applicant plans to create multiple outputs within a single mini-project, they must prepare separate applications for each planned output and create a single document from these forms. Applicants must submit their application for the opinion of the EOSC CZ WG according to the instructions on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/projects/open-science-ii/mini-projects-and-opinion-of-the-wg>.

The relevant EOSC CZ WG confirms that the planned output(s) of the mini-project develop(s) or respond(s) to the requirements of the research and domain EOSC communities and builds on the outputs of previous projects and activities of the EOSC CZ initiative and thus meets the requirements of the NDI. It further confirms that the planned output(s) correspond(s) to the assigned output type from the Catalogue of Outputs.

The EOSC CZ WG says YES/NO to every output for a single mini-project in the application submitted. **Applicants may continue to prepare an application for a mini-project for a specific Call with a single planned output only if it has received a positive opinion.** In the event that the applicant has planned multiple outputs in a mini-project, they may continue to prepare the application for the mini-project for a specific Call only for those outputs for which they have received a positive opinion.

If the EOSC CZ WG expresses a negative opinion on the planned output/on any of the planned outputs, it is not possible to submit such application for a mini-project.

Applications for an opinion must be accompanied by a valid electronic signature, recognized under the Act no. 297/2016 Coll., of the statutory body of the applicant or persons authorized to sign on the basis of a power of attorney/authorization (the power of attorney/authorization must then be included as an annex to the "Application for an Opinion").

Requests for opinions must be sent by e-mail to the EOSC CZ Secretariat at info@eosc.cz.

The subject line of the e-mail **must** state:

"Request for an Opinion – Open Science II Mini-Projects" and identify a domain/thematic cluster.

Requests for opinions will be received within the deadlines set out in the specific Call. Applicants receive the opinion of the relevant EOSC CZ WG within 30 calendar days from the end of the receiving period for applications for an opinion. The applicant then attaches the Opinion of the relevant EOSC CZ WG, as well as the Application for



an Opinion on the basis of which the Opinion of the EOSC CZ WG was provided, to the Application for a Mini-Project in IS Věda.

4.8.2. Content of applications for a mini-project

Applications for a mini-project in IS Věda must include the following information:

- a) Abstract of the mini-project: the applicant must, among other things, describe the initial state and the target state that they wish to achieve through the mini-project, state the need for the proposed positions and the rationale for the need, the technical solution and the economic requirements of the project;
- b) Assignment of the output to a domain/thematic cluster;
- c) Assignment of the output to only one of the output types in the Catalogue of Outputs, Output Specification column;
- d) Description of the planned output (including technical specifications) and justification for its necessity:
 - For **Call No. 1 Open Science II Mini-Projects**: How the planned output(s) of the mini-project build(s) on the planned outputs and/or supported activities of the Open Science II project and the justification for how substantially the planned outputs and/or supported activities extend/complement the Open Science II project.
 - For **Call No. 2 Open Science II – Open call**: how the planned output of the mini-project contributes to ensuring a data-oriented research environment on the part of the applicant for a mini-project.
 - Information about the language in which the output is to be processed.
- e) Uniqueness of activities – elimination of double funding – the applicant must define the planned output in relation to the outputs of other projects it is realizing. It must be clear from the text that the output is not supported by another project being realized by the applicant. The Beneficiary and partners of the Open Science II project shall also apply this definition to the Open Science project, if this is possible at the time of submitting the application for the mini-project;
- f) Risk analysis – risk preparedness, risk monitoring system, risks of which the applicant is aware when preparing the application;
- g) Budget of mini-project – see Chapter 4.9
- h) Sustainability – see Chapter 8;
- i) Horizontal principles – see Chapter 9;

4.9. Budget of mini-projects

The funds provided for the realization of mini-projects are of a non-investment nature.





The minimum allocation per mini-project is not set; the maximum allocation per mini-project is set at 4.5 million CZK.

The minimum duration of a mini-project is six weeks and the maximum duration of a mini-project is eighteen months.

Mini-projects will be financed in the form of ex-post financing.

Participating institutions are required to co-finance mini-projects **to the amount of 10%**. The amount of co-financing is automatically calculated in the budget in the application for a mini-project in IS Věda. A Participating Institution will only receive funds amounting to 90% of the total budget for the mini-project in its account.

The project budget is equal to the amount calculated separately for each output using the Lump Sum Calculator: Mini-Projects (see annex of the Call: Lump Sum Calculator: Mini-Projects). In the case of multiple outputs within a single mini-project, the application will include as many Calculators as there are planned outputs in the mini-project. In IS Věda, the applicant indicates the total amount assigned to the output from the Calculator (exact amount according to the Calculator, i.e. to two decimal places). If a mini-project contains multiple outputs, the application must state the total amount for each individual output according to the relevant Calculator. IS Věda automatically calculates the total budget of the mini-project. The amount of co-financing is also automatically calculated in IS Věda based on this amount.

CU reserves the right to update the Calculator in every Call on the basis of the updated Lump Sum Calculator – Mini-Projects, which is published by the Managing Authority of the Operational Programme Jan Amos Comenius here: https://op-jak.cz/vyzvy/vyzva-c-02_24_030-open-science-ii/#dokumenty.

The applicant must attach a mandatory annex, the Schedule of Outputs (annex of the Call), to the application. In this, they indicate the period of operation of individual positions during the realization of the mini-project in individual months.

Setting up Lump Sums – Mini-Projects and their reporting:

Lump sum	The budget for a mini-project is calculated using the Lump Sum Calculator annex, in which the applicant for the mini-project fills in the correct number of FTE and the number of planned months of work on the selected output for the selected positions: Expert 1 to Expert 5 (see the definition below). In the event that one mini-project contains multiple outputs (lump sums), the applicant for the mini-project must use the Lump Sum Calculator for each output separately.
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	<p>Based on these inputs, a lump sum (mini-project), including an automatic addition of flat-rate costs in the amount of 15%, is calculated.</p> <p>The lump sum (mini-project) calculated covers all personnel costs of selected position types, including statutory levies and flat-rate costs.</p> <p>The calculation of the lump sum (mini-projects) is undergoing evaluation by CU. The evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of the valuation of the lump sum by the applicant for the mini-project (the duration of the positions and the length of their employment in relation to the difficulty of preparing the planned output).</p>
Activity output	Proof of the achieved output according to the specifications contained in the Catalogue of Outputs
Output documentation	Output of mini-project = documentation (see the Catalogue of Outputs – method of proof of output) submitted by the participating institution that realized the mini-project, on the basis of which the eligibility of the lump sum is to be demonstrated.
Framework job description for jobs included in calculation of the lump sum (mini-projects): Title	Description of activities
Expert 1	Analytical activities in research data systems. Preparation of documentation, analyses and methodologies. Preparation of documents for further development and streamlining of systems operation in the context of EOSC policies. Applies and develops standardization in the field of research data systems. Monitors the operation of systems and processes feedback from it for further development. Presents the results of their work to other experts.



Expert 2	Development, optimization and implementation of software tools for handling research data (or metadata), including tools for sharing, linking, accessing, secondary use, security, backup and the interconnection of systems. Prepares the relevant technical documentation and makes it available to other experts.
Expert 3	Data-curating activities for domain-specific data repositories. Activities focusing on the FAIRification of and granting of access to research data, as well as its sharing and long-term storage in accordance with EOSC requirements. Presents the results of their work to other experts.
Expert 4	Support and training of researchers in the field of handling research data in the context of the EOSC. Processes feedback for the development and optimization of systems with regard to domain and inter-domain cooperation. Presents the results of their work to other experts.
Expert 5	Administration and support of computer networks/systems, SW and HW tools and hardware facilities, operation monitoring and analysis of operational efficiency needs for domain, inter-domain and national cooperation.

When filling out the Calculator, the applicant must respect the numbering of the Experts according to the above table. In the justification section of the Calculator, the Applicant must set out the justification for the need for each position and the justification for the need for a specific amount of employment, provide all relevant information that may be decisive for the substantive evaluation process in terms of the operation of positions in the mini-project, including the justification of the proposed financial costs, which will also provide a comprehensive justification of the required funds based on fixed initial data and formulas in the Calculator.

4.10. Recommendations for applicants

When preparing an application for a mini-project, applicants should take into account the individual evaluation criteria listed in the annex of the Call.





The text fields of the application in IS Věda are automatically set for a limited number of characters. If the maximum number of characters specified is insufficient for the applicant, annexes containing additional texts corresponding to the individual text fields of the application in IS Věda and to which they refer in these text fields may be attached to the application for a mini-project.

However, the text fields of the application in IS Věda cannot only refer to annexes to the application.

4.11. Ex-post funding

In the case of ex-post financing, the eligible expenses incurred for the realization of the mini-project are reimbursed retroactively to the participating institution. Participating Institutions pay for expenses incurred during the realization of mini-projects from their own resources. When realization is completed, it documents the created output of the mini-project according to the declared method of documentation in the Catalogue of Outputs. Eligible expenses are reimbursed retroactively following approval by CU.

4.12. Receipt of applications for mini-projects

Applications for mini-projects must be submitted through IS Věda at <https://is.cuni.cz/veda>. Applications for mini-projects must be submitted in Czech or English. Subsequently, and also during realization and sustainability, applications are administered according to the chosen language of the application. All administration of applications submitted in Czech is in Czech, and applications in English are administered in English. The outputs of mini-projects are prepared in English or Czech according to the needs of experts. Applicants use the language of the output specified in the application for the mini-project (see Chapter 4.8.2).

Applications for mini-projects must include a positive opinion of the relevant domain/thematic working group of the EOSC Initiative (<https://www.eosc.cz/en/working-groups>) and other mandatory annexes as specified in Chapter 5.6.

Applications for mini-projects (PDF generated from the IS Věda system) must be accompanied by a valid electronic signature recognized under the Act No. 297/2016 Coll., the statutory body of the applicant or a person authorized to sign on the basis of a power of attorney/authorization. Signed applications for mini-projects must be entered into IS Věda by the applicant (annex type Application, signed by an authorized representative) and only then can the applicant send (submit) the entire application in IS Věda.

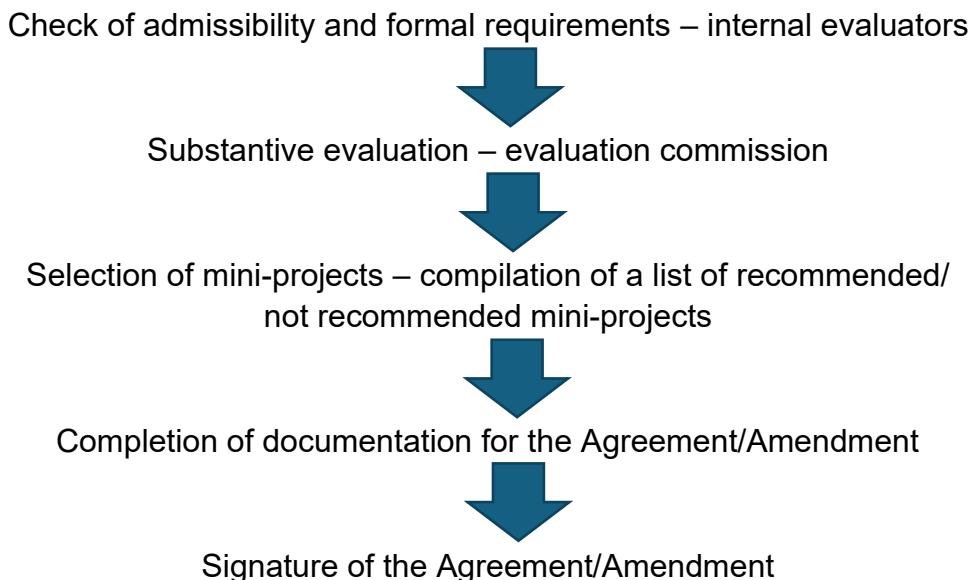
Applications for mini-projects must be submitted by the applicant in the period between the start date and the end date for the receipt of applications for mini-projects in the relevant Call. Every application for a mini-project receives a unique ID in IS Věda.





5. Evaluation and approval of mini-projects

The evaluation of mini-projects is a two-stage process. The first stage consists of a formal assessment and an assessment of admissibility. The second stage is an substantive evaluation.



5.1. Check of admissibility and formal requirements

The check of admissibility and formal requirements is carried out in a single step by CU internal evaluators (1st phase of evaluation).

The criteria for checking formal requirements and admissibility have an exclusionary function, i.e. they are classified as fulfilled/unfulfilled (or the criterion is irrelevant to the given application for funding).

The criteria for checking formal requirements and admissibility are rectifiable (i.e. it is possible for the applicant to complete the approval process on the basis of a request from CU to eliminate defects) and non-rectifiable (i.e. failure to comply shall in all cases entail exclusion from the approval process without the possibility of adjustment by the applicant).

In the event of failure to meet any of the rectifiable criteria and, at the same time, provided that all the non-rectifiable criteria are met, the applicant is asked through IS Věda to eliminate the defects of the application for a mini-project (e.g. provision of missing information/documents), usually within five working days from the date of delivery of the request to eliminate the defects. The deadline for the elimination of defects may be extended on the basis of a request from the applicant, which must be sent to CU through an internal message in IS Věda before the deadline. The request for an extension of the deadline for the elimination of defects must contain the





justification and the period by which the deadline for the elimination of defects is to be extended. Modifications to the application by the applicant beyond the scope of the request for the rectification of defects are not allowed. CU recommends that applicant consult the university immediately through IS Věda in the event of any ambiguities related to the request for the elimination of defects.

In the event that the applicant fails to eliminate the defect within the specified deadline on the basis of a request to do so, the application for a mini-project shall be excluded from the approval process.

If any non-rectifiable criterion is not met, the application for a mini-project is excluded from later stages of the approval process.

In the event that it is not possible to evaluate any of the non-rectifiable criteria for obvious and objective reasons:

- the evaluator does not have sufficient documents;
- the documents are incomplete;
- the information provided in the application for the mini-project and/or its annexes is inconsistent with each other;

the criterion is not evaluated and the applicant is invited to remedy the defects so that it conforms with the relevant rectifiable criterion of formal requirements (criteria: All mandatory data are entered in the application for funding; all annexes are documented and in the required form), if possible. This procedure must in no way undermine the equal treatment of all applicants and the transparency of the approval process. Requests for the rectification of defects shall concern solely the check of formal requirements and admissibility, and not the factual content/quality of the application for the mini-project. Therefore, an applicant cannot be asked, for example, to supplement a missing job description, an incomplete description/justification in one part of the application, to adjust the budget, or to complete a submitted application for a mini-project.

The results of the assessment of admissibility and formal requirements will be made available to applicants in IS Věda; applicants are informed about this via a message in IS Věda. Successful applicants proceed to the phase of the objective evaluation of applications for mini-projects (2nd phase of evaluation).

Please note that in the case of a call for modification, it is necessary to retain all previous versions of the application and all annexes in the IS Věda application annexes. When modifying the application or annexes, the applicant must not remove the original application or any annex from IS Věda; the same, modified annexes are distinguished by a numerical series (versioned).



5.2. Substantive evaluation

The substantive evaluation is carried out by an evaluation committee (EC) according to the evaluation criteria. The criteria for substantive evaluation, including their function and description of the evaluation method, are contained in a separate annex to the Open Science II Mini-Project Calls (annex of the Call).

The EC is governed by the Statutes and the Rules of Procedure of the Evaluation Committee, specimens of which are provided at <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>.

The objective evaluation criteria have an exclusionary or combined function:

- Exclusion criteria are criteria which, if not met by the applicant, result in the exclusion of the application for a mini-project from the approval process.
- Combined criteria are criteria for which points are awarded; if the minimum threshold of points set by the Call is not met, the application for a mini-project is excluded from the approval process.

The EC performs the evaluation in the evaluation table, in which it evaluates the individual criteria and provides a comment/justification for each evaluation.

The EC assigns a verbal descriptor to every criterion; this is then converted into a score expressed as a number. The EC assigns the rating expressed by the descriptor based on the severity of the reservations formulated. The specific set of descriptors that can be allocated is listed for each individual criterion in the annex of the Call.

If an application for a mini-project does not contain information in the scope/detail/quality sufficient for the evaluation of a specific criterion, the EC shall state this fact in a comment and evaluate the criterion as not met or give the minimum possible descriptor or number of points (zero).

The maximum number of points that the EC can assign to each application for a mini-project is 85. Based on the results of the substantive evaluation, the EC determines whether to recommend the application for a mini-project for signature of an Agreement/Amendment (see Chapter 5.4):

- YES – if the application for funding receives 50 or more points and at the same time meets the minimum points threshold for all combined criteria while at the same time meeting the exclusion criterion. The application for a mini-project progresses to the next stage of the approval process.
- NO – if the application for support receives less than 50 points and/or does not meet the minimum points threshold for at least one of the combined criteria and/or does not meet the exclusion criterion. The application for a mini-project is excluded from later stages of the approval process.



The EC must provide justification for its opinions in all cases. The minutes of meetings of the EC are published no later than 15 working days from the date of termination of the meeting on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>. The results of the objective evaluation are made available to applicants in IS Věda; applicants are informed about this via a message in IS Věda.

Please note that in the case of a call for modification, it is necessary to retain all previous versions of the application and all annexes in the IS Věda application annexes. When modifying the application or annexes, the applicant must not remove the original application or any annex from IS Věda; the same, modified annexes are distinguished by a numerical series (versioned).

Applications for a mini-project that meet the conditions for an objective evaluation proceed to the selection stage for mini-projects – see Chapter 5.3.

5.3. Selection of mini-projects

The mini-project selection process involves the preparation of a list of recommended/not recommended mini-projects in the queue of reserve mini-projects (the "Queue"). The list is compiled by the guarantors of the grant scheme on the basis of the results of meetings of the EC and with regard to the allocation of the Call.

Following its signature by the Rector of Charles University, the resulting list is published on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>.

All applicants are subsequently informed of the results of the evaluation process through IS Věda. Successful applicants are asked to prepare the documents necessary for the conclusion of the Agreement/Amendment (see Chapter 5.4).

Applicants whose mini-projects meet the conditions of the Call and are on the list of recommended mini-projects are asked to sign an Agreement/Amendment in order of the number of points awarded. In the event that points totals are equal, the order in which applications for a mini-projects were submitted is decisive until the Call allocation is exhausted. If the cumulative amount of the recommended mini-projects exceeds the specified Call allocation, the mini-projects that are not covered by the Call allocation are included in the Queue.

5.4. Signature of the Agreement/Amendment

Funds are provided on the basis of an Agreement/Amendment. Annex no. 8 of this Methodology is a template for the Agreement on Cooperation in Research, Development and Innovation.





Through a message in IS Věda, CU asks successful applicants for a mini-project to provide documents and annexes before signing the Agreement/Amendment (see Chapter 5.7), or to make a binding modification to the application for a mini-project (based on the evaluation by the EC) while setting a deadline for submission of those documents. Prior to expiry of the deadline, applicants may request an extension (through a message in IS Věda) while providing a justification for their request.

After all documents and annexes have been sent, the Agreement/Amendment is sent to the applicant for signature via a data message. Simultaneously, applicants are informed of the sending of the Agreement/Amendment for signature by a message in IS Věda.

The Rector of Charles University makes decisions on the conclusion of Agreements/Amendments on the basis of a list of successful applications for a mini-project and in connection with the allocation of the Call.

In the event that a successful applicant refuses to sign an Agreement/Amendment, the Rector may decide to conclude an Agreement/Amendment for another application for a mini-project, which shall be taken from the Queue in order.

There is no legal entitlement to conclude an Agreement/Amendment.

5.5. Objection to results of evaluation

Comments on the evaluation process can only be submitted after the results have been announced (publication of the final list of mini-projects, recommended/not recommended mini-projects/mini-projects in the queue) signed by the Rector of Charles University.

Unsuccessful applicants are entitled to comment on the results of the evaluation process, i.e. lodge an objection to the results of the evaluation, within 15 calendar days from the date of delivery of the evaluation results via IS Věda. This period starts on the date on which the applicant is sent a message about the publication of the results of the evaluation in IS Věda.

Unsuccessful applicants are those whose application for a mini-project did not meet the conditions for advancing to the next stage of the approval process. Applicants whose application for a mini-project has been included in the Queue (mini-projects that have received the minimum number of points for objective evaluation under Chapter 5.2 but do not receive funding due to the exhaustion of the Call allocation) are also considered unsuccessful.

Applicants can only submit an Objection to the Results of Evaluation (an "Objection") via a form in IS Věda (the form is attached as Annex 1 of this Methodology), or in exceptional and justified cases (e.g. malfunction of IS Věda) via a data box. The date of delivery of the Objection is the date on which the applicant submits the Objection. The objection form must be signed by the applicant's statutory representative/person





authorized on the basis of power of attorney/authorization. Objections submitted after the aforementioned period of 15 calendar days has expired will not be considered by CU.

Objections will be assessed by CU in the event of a breach of the rules or methodological procedures specified in the Methodology (and its annexes) by CU or the EC, i.e. in the following cases in particular:

- objective contradiction of the commentary/justification of the evaluator or the EC with applicable legal and similar standards or methodological regulations (i.e. with a Call or follow-up documentation to the Call, e.g. with this Methodology and its annexes, etc.);
- the comment/justification of the opinion of the evaluator or the EC has not complied with the rules for the evaluation and selection of mini-projects;
- obvious error in the justification/opinion of the evaluator or the EC (e.g. the committee highlights a missing, but not insufficient, description of some part of the application for the mini-project and the applicant demonstrates in the Objection that the description was included in the application);
- non-compliance with any procedural step in the approval process;
- bias/conflict of interest/violation of confidentiality and impartiality of an evaluator or member of the EC.

Comments in the Objection that meet any of the conditions below will not be upheld by CU:

- appealing against the expert opinion of the evaluator, or the EC without providing evidence of a breach of a specific rule of the Call and its documentation;
- which are confusing (it is not clear what the applicant is seeking, against which of the evaluations of the evaluators or the EC the applicant is raising its objection, contains factual errors, etc.);
- appeal against non-recommendation to sign an Agreement/Amendment due to insufficient financial allocation of the call;
- appealing against non-recommendation to sign an Agreement/Amendment due to support for applications for mini-projects that received a higher number of points in the objective evaluation;
- in the event of repeated submission of an Objection to the result of a single stage of the approval process;
- the Objection was not sent in the prescribed manner/within the prescribed period.





In its submission, the applicant is obliged to:

- state/justify why they are lodging the Objection (evaluation of which specific criteria or procedures they are objecting to);
- clearly justify its position and substantiate it with unambiguous and objective evidence contained in the application for the mini-project. Such evidence must be supported by specific references to the relevant parts of the application for a mini-project or its annexes, to the relevant part of the Call/follow-up documentation to the Call (additional information/supporting documents that were not included in the application for the mini-project or its annexes will not be considered);

Applicants are obliged to submit Objections in their entirety. Additional documents sent after the Objection has been sent will not be considered by CU.

Objections received shall be handled in one of the following ways:

- Upholding, if the Objection is found to be justified;
- Upheld, if the Objection is found to be partially justified;
- Dismissed, if the Objection is found to be unjustified or was not sent in the prescribed manner/within the prescribed deadline.

The deadline for processing an Objection is set at 30 calendar days from the date it is sent in IS Věda by the applicant.

If an Objection is found to be justified or partially justified, CU will take the necessary remedial measures. Re-evaluation of applications for mini-projects is overseen by the remedial EC. Re-evaluation shall take place only in cases where, taking into account the possible maximum of points in the re-evaluated criteria, it is possible to reverse the result of the evaluation, i.e. to recommend an application for a mini-project that was not initially recommended for the signing of an Agreement/Amendment.

If an Objection is found to be unjustified, the outcome of the evaluation process does not change and the application for a mini-project is not recommended for signature of an Agreement/Amendment or remains in the Queue of mini-projects.

It is no longer possible for the applicant to submit any further comments against the Objection process.

A detailed description of the mini-project evaluation process is provided in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Mini-Projects, which is published on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>.



5.6. Mandatory annexes to applications for a mini-project

- Application for a mini-project in PDF format, generated from IS Věda and signed by the statutory body of the applicant (see Chapter 4.12).
- Opinion of the relevant EOSC CZ WG (Annex 3 of this Methodology) together with the completed Request for an Opinion (Annex no. 5 of this Methodology), which was sent for the purposes of the Opinion of the relevant EOSC CZ WG.
- Lump Sum Calculator – Mini-Projects (Annex of the Call) – the calculator must be filled in separately for each individual output of the mini-project (Fill in as many Calculators as are outputs planned within a single mini-project).
- Declaration of parties interested in cooperation as a Participating Institution (Annex no. 2 of this Methodology)
- Power of Attorney/Mandate (if the application for a mini-project is signed by a person authorized to sign on the basis of a power of attorney/mandate).
- Schedule of Outputs (annex of the Call)

5.7. Documents before signing the Agreement/Amendment

- extract from the **Criminal Register of Natural Persons for members of the statutory body** of the successful applicant – must not be older than 90 calendar days prior to signature of the Agreement/Amendment.
- successful applicants must submit a **completed and signed test of the criteria of an undertaking in difficulty**, supplemented by a declaration of interconnection with other undertakings and, if the applicant declares itself to be a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), also a declaration of the size of the undertaking (see Annex no. 4 of this Methodology and instructions for its completion in Chapter 6.4., in points 3, 8 and 11 of the Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries of OP JAK – general part).
- **documentation on debt-free status** of the successful applicant with respect to the tax office and the Czech Social Security Administration, not older than 90 calendar days prior to signature of the Agreement/Amendment.



6. Final Report

Following completion of the realization of the mini-project, the participating institution must submit a Final Report via IS Věda. The Final Report must be submitted within 30 calendar days from the completion date of the mini-project. The content of the Final Report must include a description of the output created and evidence of the output itself. The output must be documented in the form in which the proof of output is described in the "Method of submitting the output" section in the Catalogue of Outputs. In the Final Report, the applicant must provide a description of the output and its technical parameters in relation to the information provided in the application for the mini-project. The applicant must indicate how the output is used within the institution. In the event that the output has been transferred to another institution, it shall indicate this institution and the responsible person who received/works with the output of the mini-project.

An obligatory annex to the Final Report is the Opinion of the thematic/domain EOSC CZ WG on the fulfilment of the criteria of functionality/scope of outputs (Annex No. 7 of this Methodology), which will be issued on the basis of the Request for an opinion of PS EOSC CZ – fulfilment of the criteria of functionality/scope of outputs (Annex no. 6 of this Methodology). The EOSC CZ WG issues an Opinion within 20 calendar days from the date of receipt of the request. Applicants must submit their application for the opinion of an EOSC CZ according to the instructions on the website <https://www.eosc.cz/en/projects/open-science-ii/mini-projects-and-opinion-of-the-wg>.

In the event that the Opinion is not delivered to the applicant within the given period, the deadline for submitting the Final Report is extended by 15 calendar days.

In the event that the planned output is not created/submitted as part of the Final Report and/or is not documented according to the specified Method of documenting the output (see Catalogue of Outputs) and/or fails to meet the criteria for functionality/scope of the output, the total amount calculated for the output in the Lump Sum Calculator – Mini-Projects and specified in the Agreement/Amendment will not be paid to the Participating Institution.

In the case of outputs for which the Catalogue of Outputs provides for the obligation to assign a persistent identifier (PID), the Participating Institution is obliged to apply for a DOI in good time or to ensure that another relevant persistent identifier (PID) is assigned in good time. Further information on how to apply for a DOI is available here: <https://www.eosc.cz/en/projects/outcomes-of-the-eosc-cz-initiative>



6.1 Approval/rejection process for Final Reports

The administrative process of approving/rejecting the Final Report is managed and authorized by the relevant Project Manager.

The duly submitted Final Report and its mandatory annex are evaluated by the guarantor of the grant scheme according to the following criteria:

- proof of output(s) in accordance with the form of proof according to the Catalogue of Outputs
- meeting/not meeting the criteria of functionality/scope of output according to the mandatory annex (Opinion of the Thematic/Domain EOSC CZ WG on meeting the criteria of functionality/scope of outputs)
- description of the output created and its formal compliance with the description of the planned output in the Application

The guarantor of the grant scheme shall draw up a protocol on the evaluation of the Final Report. Based on the Final Report Evaluation Protocol, the Project Manager informs the Participating Institution via IS Věda about the approval/rejection of the submitted Final Report. No appeal may be lodged against the rejection of a Final Report.

6.2 Mandatory annexes to the Final Report

- Opinion of the Thematic/Domain EOSC CZ WG on compliance with the criteria of functionality/scope of outputs (Annex no. 7 of this Methodology)

7. Changes to mini-projects

7.1. Changes affecting the Agreement/Amendment

The participating institution may, in the course of realization, request an amendment to the Agreement/Amendment in justified cases:

- Change of the statutory representative

The participating institution must submit requests for changes to the Agreement/Amendment via IS Věda. The request must provide a specific justification for the proposed change.

The participating institution must also submit a draft amendment to the Agreement/draft amendment to the Amendment that reflects the changes.

CU must comment on the draft amendment to the Agreement/Amendment within 30 calendar days from sending of the change request. In the event of a positive assessment, this statement will include the sending of an amendment to the Agreement/amendment to the Amendment via a data message for signature.





7.2. Changes not affecting the Agreement/Amendment

During realization, the participating institution may request a change of the contact person/researcher for the mini-project. In this case, the participating institution must make a change in IS Věda and at the same time announces this change via a message in IS Věda.



8. Sustainability

The sustainability of the output(s) of a mini-project is determined for a period of five years from the completion of realization of the mini-project in accordance with Regulation (EU) no. 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

In the application for a mini-project, applicants must describe how the sustainability of the output(s) of the mini-project will be ensured in terms of personnel and financial resources. In the event that the output of the mini-project is to be transferred to another institution, this fact must be stated in the application, including identification of the institution and a description of how sustainability will be ensured in cooperation with the institution.

The Participating Institution must prepare a Sustainability Report for each year of sustainability of the mini-project, which it must include with the documentation of the mini-project in IS Věda. The deadline for submitting the Sustainability Report is calculated as follows:

Date of completion of the mini-project + 13 months. Date of submission of the first Sustainability Report + 12 months. Other years - similarly.

9. Horizontal principles

In order to achieve balanced development of regions supported by the ESI Funds, horizontal principles are included in the implementation of economic, social and territorial cohesion policy. According to Art. 9 of the General Regulation, the beneficiaries in the projects will ensure support for and compliance with horizontal principles in the field of **equal opportunities**, which are:

- equality between men and women;
- eliminating discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, worldview, disability, age or sexual orientation.

These rules also apply to Participating Institutions. According to the level of contribution of the mini-project to a specific horizontal principle, the applicant states in the application for the mini-project whether the mini-project has a **neutral or positive effect** on the horizontal principle.

Gender equality:

Positive – the mini-project is positive for equal opportunities between men and women, if equal opportunities are not the main content of the mini-project, but the outputs of the mini-project contribute to eliminating inequality between men and women.





Neutral – a mini-project is neutral with regard to equal opportunities for men and women if it does not have a direct or indirect impact on equal opportunities for men and women.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination:

Positive – the mini-project is positive with regard to equal opportunities and non-discrimination if equal opportunities are not the main content of the mini-project, but the outputs of the mini-project contribute to the elimination of discrimination or allow the participation of disadvantaged groups.

Neutral – the mini-project is neutral with regard to equal opportunities and non-discrimination as long as it does not have a direct or indirect impact on disadvantaged groups.

In applications for mini-projects, applicants must justify the selected level in both areas.

10. Publicity of mini-projects

Successful applicants must publish on their websites and social media (if they have them) information about obtaining a mini-project from the Call for mini-projects. The post must contain a statement that the mini-project is being co-financed by the European Union and will be marked with mandatory logos in accordance with the Rules of the OP JAC Call no. 02_24_030 Open Science II - chap. 7.7.3 RAB – general section (EU emblem, mandatory text "Co-funded by the European Union" placed next to the EU emblem and the MEYS logo), which are available at https://op-jak.cz/vyzvy/vyzva-c-02_24_030-open-science-ii/#dokumenty.

11. Overview of tools and networks

Information on the announcement of Calls and all documentation of Calls for mini-projects will be published as a priority in the Projects, Open Science II section on the <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz> website.

Information on the announcement of Calls will also be published on the CU website (<https://cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html>), where it will be placed on the news banner on the main page with a link to <https://www.eosc.cz/en/about-eosc-cz/initiative-eosc-cz>





In addition, information about the announcement of the Calls will be published on LinkedIn, as was the case with the Pilot Call here: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/univerzita-karlova/>

Information on the Calls announced and the availability of the Call documentation will be provided as part of the meetings of the EOSC CZ Initiative Working Groups, in which a representative of the Open Science II project participates.

Furthermore, the same information will be provided as part of the meetings of the Institution Working Group established by CU, which will meet online once per month.

12. Overview of annexes

Annex no. 1: Form for submitting an Objection to the Results of Evaluation

Annex no. 2: Declaration of parties interested in cooperation as a Participating Institution

Annex no. 3: Opinion of the Thematic/Domain EOSC CZ WG

Annex no. 4: Criteria test for an undertaking in difficulty

Annex no. 5: Request for an Opinion of the EOSC CZ WG – Open Science II Mini-Projects

Annex no. 6: Annex of the Final Report - Request for an Opinion of the EOSC CZ WG – Open Science II Mini-Projects

Annex no. 7: Annex of the Final Report - Opinion of the Thematic/Domain EOSC CZ WG – Open Science II Mini-Projects

Annex no. 8: Agreement on Cooperation in Research, Development and Innovation

