

AQUARIUS

Aqua Research Infrastructure Services

for the health and protection of our unique ocean, seas and freshwater systems

Aodhán Fitzgerald

27th ERVO Annual Meeting

3rd June 2025



Funded by
the European Union

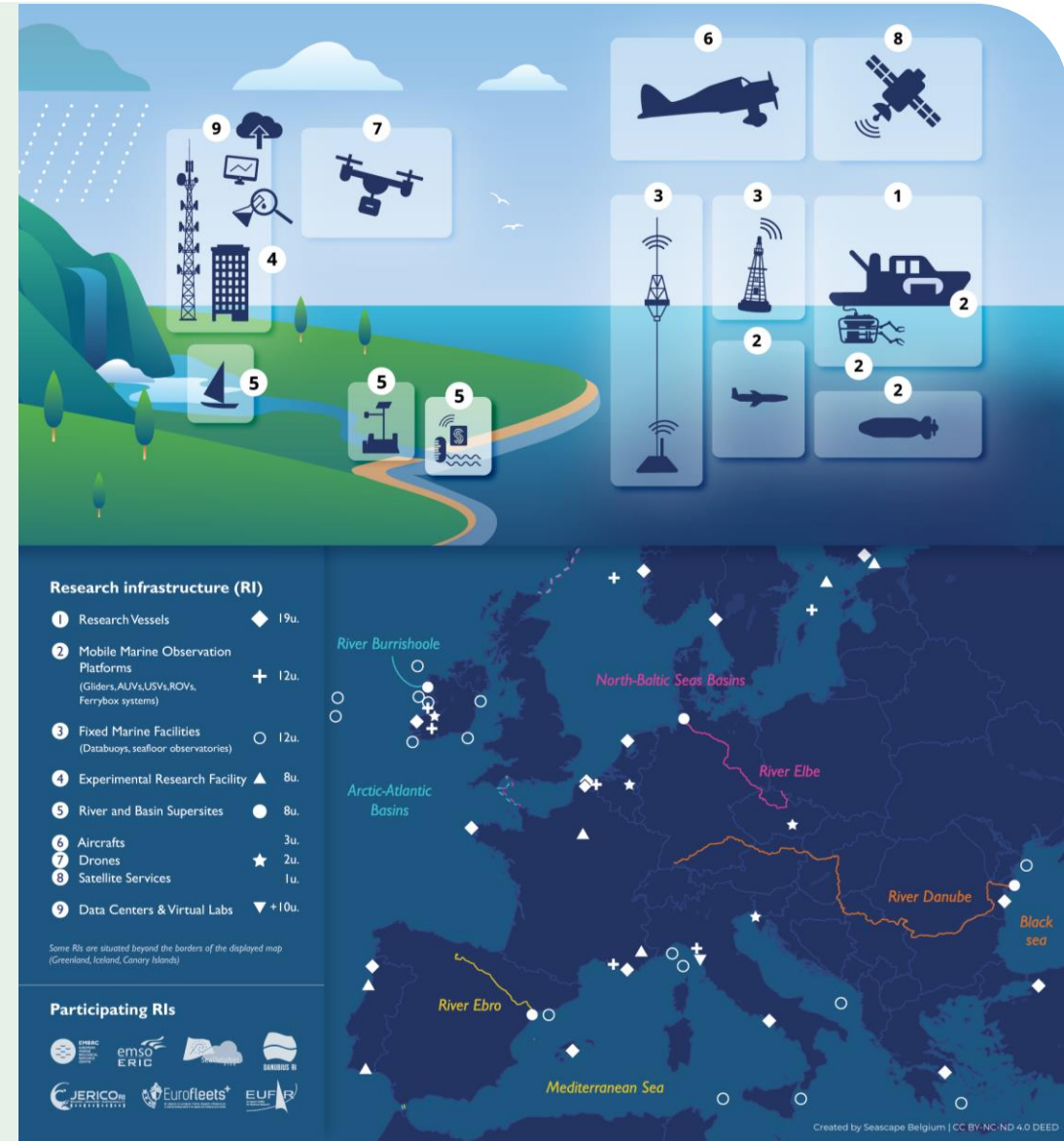
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About AQUARIUS

AQUARIUS will **provide access to a comprehensive and diverse suite of research infrastructures** to address challenges & explore opportunities for the sustainability of our marine & freshwater ecosystems.



- **4 years duration Mar 24 – Feb 28**
- **45 Partners (18 nations)**
- **€14.5 Million Budget**
- **Marine Institute Budget: €2.2mill**
- **Coordinated by MI (RV Ops)**



45 partners, 18 nations



AQUARIUS Infrastructure Catalogue

- Research Vessels: **18**
- Mobile Marine Observation Platforms: **12**
- Fixed Marine Facilities: **12**
- Experimental Research Facility: **8**
- River & Basin Supersites: **8**
- Aircraft: **3**
- Drones: **2**
- Satellite Services: **1**



AQUARIUS
Call 1 Now
Closed

Call 1 Regional Lighthouse Call - Results

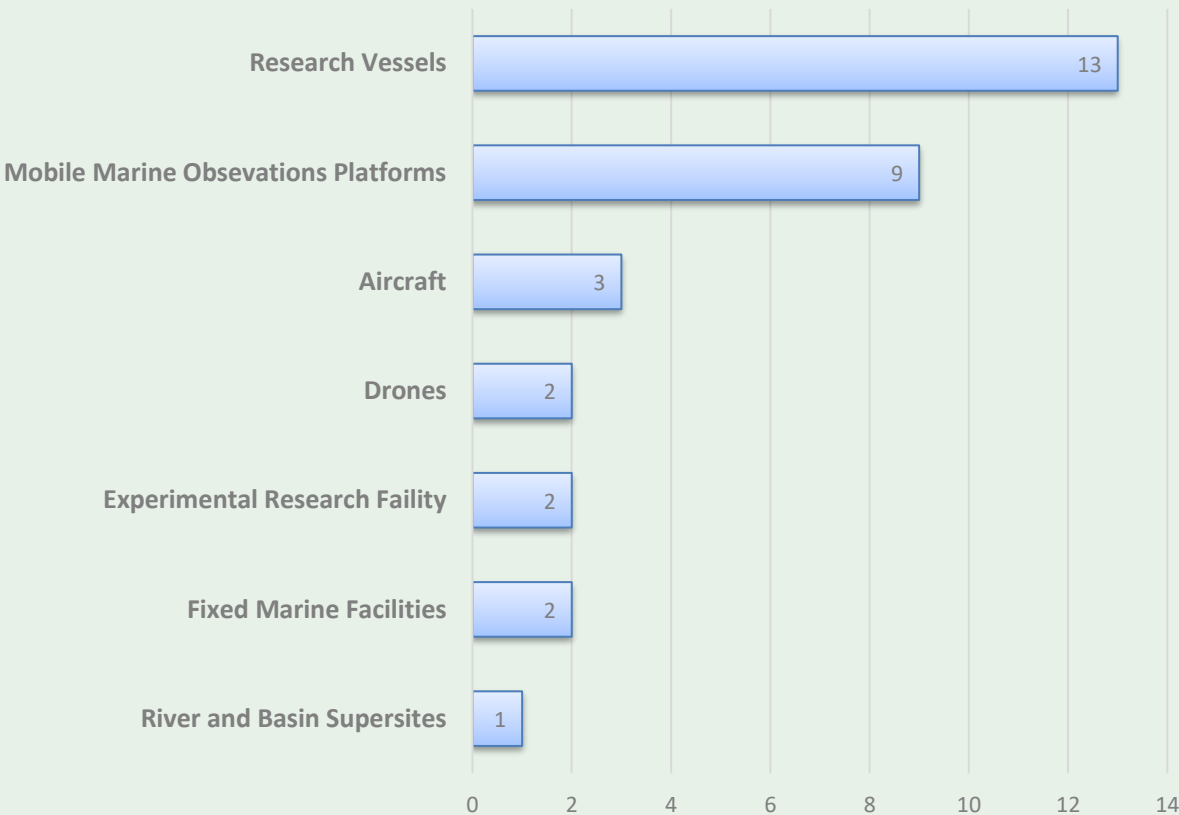
- **18 applications received for the 1st AQUARIUS Call**
- Good mix of infrastructures, all lighthouse regions covered, and a variety of scientific disciplines in proposals
- 25 unique infrastructures were selected as first priority from a catalogue of 65
- Initial eligibility check was carried out and 1 proposal was ineligible.
- Logistical pre-check was carried out 28th Jan - all 17 remaining proposals were logistically feasible and put forward for Scientific evaluation by the Scientific Expert Panel (SEP).
- The SEP recommended **14** proposals for funding (11 with first Priority, 3 with 2nd Priority)
- **3** proposals were not recommended for funding by the SEP.
- The 11 first Priority proposals are now being logistically evaluated to ensure they are feasible and funding has been confirmed for a number of proposals to date

Research Infrastructure applied for in Call 1

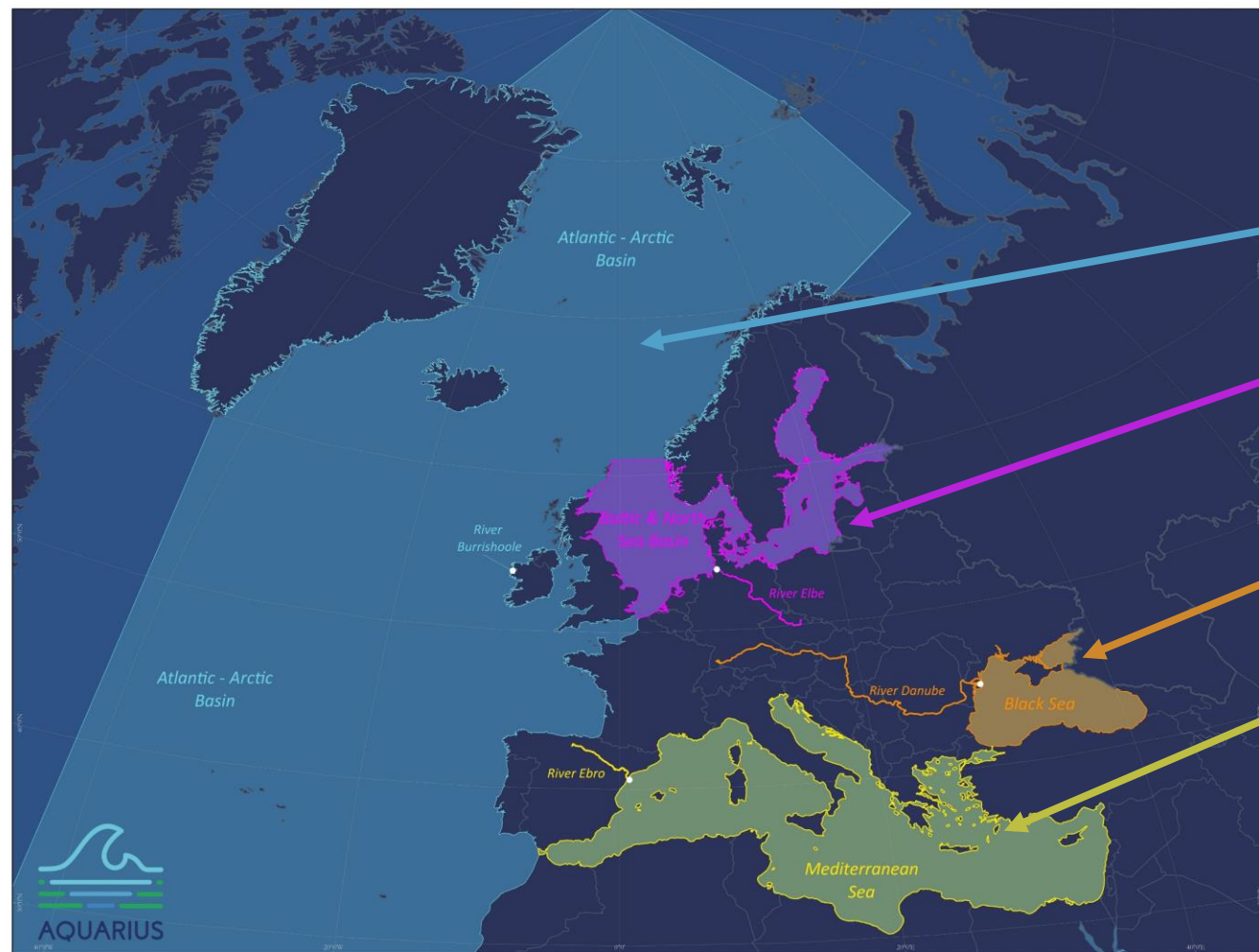
- Research Vessels and Marine Mobile Observation Platforms were the most requested RI types



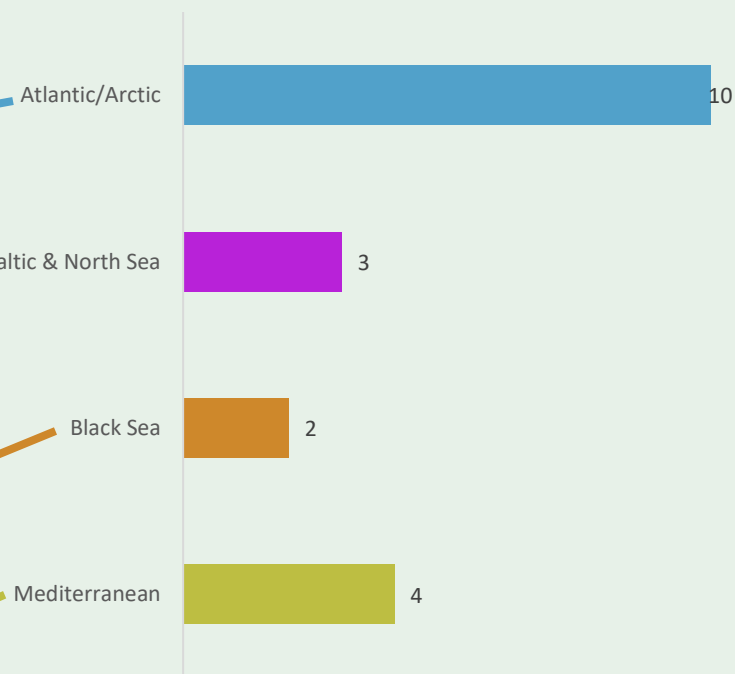
Count of RIs Requested



Call 1 Preferred Regions



Number of proposals targeting each Lighthouse Region



One proposal overlaps with the Baltic & North Sea and the Mediterranean!

Logistical Evaluations

Overall SEP Rankings

298 Days
Currently
Granted!



- 11 'A' Ranked Proposals – Recommended for Scheduling
- 3 'B' Ranked Proposals – on Hold
- 3 'C' Ranked Proposals – Not Recommended for Scheduling

PROJECT NAME	REQUESTED RI(s)	SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE	AREA	FUNDED ACCESS UNITS
ABACUS 2026	SOCIB Glider Facility	Oceanography	Mediterranean Sea	54 Days Granted
AR7E-2026	RV Celtic Explorer	Oceanography	Atlantic-Arctic	22 Days Granted
ASTRA	RV Tubitak Marmara	Oceanography	Black Sea	15 Days Granted
BASEVOC	Utö Marine and Atmospheric Research Station	Oceanography	Baltic Sea	100 Days Granted
BlueCFjords	RV Celtic Explorer	Earth Sciences	Atlantic-Arctic	Funded by POLARIN
CRUST	RV Jákup Sverri	Oceanography	Atlantic-Arctic	TBC
DENGATE	RV G. O. Sars, AUV Barabas, Glider Yoko	Global change & Climate observation	Atlantic-Arctic	46 Days Granted
E(ddies)GC	RV Arni Fridriksson	Oceanography	Atlantic-Arctic	10 Days Granted
GREAT	UL_MRE-ROV, RV Celtic Explorer	Ecosystems and Biodiversity	Atlantic-Arctic	38 Days Granted
Rock-IT	RV Celtic Explorer	Natural Hazards	Atlantic-Arctic	TBC
STREAM-DANUBE	RV Mare Nigrum	Oceanography	Danube River	13 Days Granted



11 unique RIs have been recommended for funding in Call 1

- 2 Logistical Evaluations ongoing...

AQUARIUS Funding Call 2 – Opening 2nd September – 28th October



AQUARIUS Funding Call



Marine and
Freshwater Infrastructure Access

Open for applications from
2 September 2025 – 28 October 2025

What to do next?

1. Visit our website for all the Call information.

aquarius-ri.eu/access

2. From 2 September 2025 register on the AQUARIUS Transnational Access Platform (TAP) and activate your account.
3. Check our Research Infrastructure Catalogue.
4. Contact the operators to find out whether your proposal can be implemented as planned.
5. Fill in the application form in the TAP.
6. Review and submit your application.



Call 2 - Marine & Freshwater Infrastructure Access

Eligibility criteria modified from Call 1

Opening 2nd
September!



User group leader and majority of users must work in a country other than the country that owns and operates the infrastructure

International collaboration: user groups with **more than four users** must include at least partners from two different countries (current affiliation)

NEW

Applicants must have the Scientific Expertise and the ability to disseminate the project results

~~Contribution to EU Mission Ocean Scientific Challenges~~

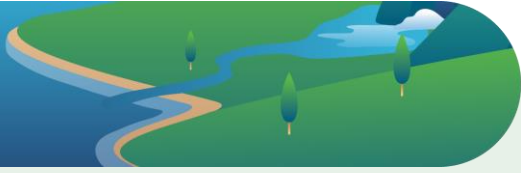
No longer an eligibility criteria – proposals addressing Mission Objectives encouraged

All information on the user group, logistical requirements, and information necessary for the assessment of the AQUARIUS eligibility criteria, must be entered in the TAP

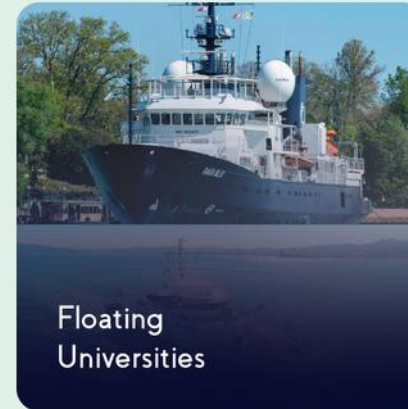
NEW

Access limit 20% for non-EU users

AQUARIUS Training Opportunities



- **Internships** - open call for applications – AQUARIUS budget available to place Early Career Researchers or Technicians at/on AQUARIUS Infrastructures – apply via the website
- **PLOCAN Glider Summer School** (2 AQUARIUS funded places available in 2025, 2026 and 2027)
- **2 x Floating Universities**
 1. **RV Gaia Blu**, Italy Aug 2026 - MED-SHIP transect focussing on long-term trend detection and variability in the Mediterranean
 2. **RV Svea**, Sweden (Baltic Sea) –June/July 2026 - Hydroacoustic survey, water quality and benthic
- **Seabed Mapping Training Programme Oct 3rd – 6th 2025** onboard the **RV Tom Crean** in conjunction with INFOMAR and HydroOctave. Focus on multi-beam data acquisition, processing and analysis



<https://aquarius-ri.eu/training-resources/training-opportunities/>



VISIT
AQUARIUS-RI.EU



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TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS TO INTEGRATED RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE



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POLARIN

POLAR
RESEARCH
INFRASTRUCTURE
NETWORK

Project Update

27th ERVO Annual Meeting
Tórshavn, Faroe Islands

Aodhan Fitzgerald



www.eu-polarin.eu



FUNDED BY THE
EUROPEAN UNION

POLARIN: POLAR RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK



14.6M€ - Horizon Europe



Coordinator: AWI



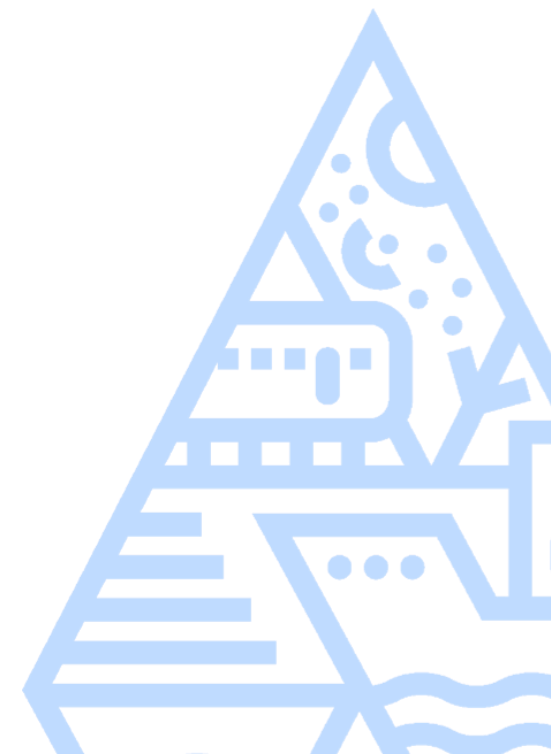
52 partners



64 RIs



March 2024 – February 2029



AMI

UNIVERSITY OF OULU

INTER=ACT

LUND UNIVERSITY

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

OGS
Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale

AARHUS UNIVERSITY

cnrs
CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

inkode

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

EUROPEAN POLAR BOARD

ETT

UiT Norges arktiske universitet

APECS
Association of Polar Early Career Scientists

SIOS

NILU
Norsk institutt for luftforskning
Norwegian Institute for Air Research

STATE INSTITUTION NATIONAL ANTARCTIC SCIENTIFIC CENTER
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

IGOT
Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território
UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

POLAR OPERATION

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Gobierno de Chile

GFZ
Helmholtz Centre POTSDAM

DTU

INSTITUT POLAIRE FRANÇAIS
PAUL-EMILE VICTOR

PONANT

MARINE & FRESHWATER RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Greenland Institute of Natural Resources

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA
MINISTERIO DE CIENCIA E INNOVACIÓN

POLARFORSKNINGS SEKRETARIATET
SWEDISH POLAR RESEARCH SECRETARIAT

EKKINGARSETUR SUÐURNESJÁ
Sudurnes Science and Learning Center

Danmarks Meteorologiske Institut

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

NORSK-POLARINSTITUTT

UNI GRAZ

TÍÐSAVNIÐ

CSIC
CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS

RIF Field Station

Stockholm University

UAM

AURORA COLLEGE
AURORA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Instytut Geofizyki Polskiej Akademii Nauk

MIKOŁAJA KOPERNIK W TORUNIU

UNIVERSITY of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Foras na Mara Marine Institute

UK Research and Innovation

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

FINNISH METEOROLOGICAL INSTITUTE

BULGARIAN ANTARCTIC INSTITUTE

UIC SCIENCE

CAFF
Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

Fondation tara océan
explorer et partager

ACTRiS
Exploring the Atmosphere



RIF

Field Station



Stockholm
University



**Instytut Geofizyki
Polskiej Akademii Nauk**



UNIwersytet
MIKOŁAJA KOPERNIKA
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Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



Exploring the Atmosphere



Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna



UIC
SCIENCE

FINNISH METEOROLOGICAL
INSTITUTE

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI



**UK Research
and Innovation**

Overall aim

A polar bear is visible in the upper right corner, standing on a snowy, icy terrain. The background features a blue body of water and a hazy, mountainous horizon under a pale sky. The overall scene is a cold, polar environment.

To provide efficient and customised RI services to address the scientific challenges of the polar regions, including access to a wide portfolio of complementary and interdisciplinary top level RIs.



POLARIN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE



Access integration to **64** research infrastructures in **both poles**

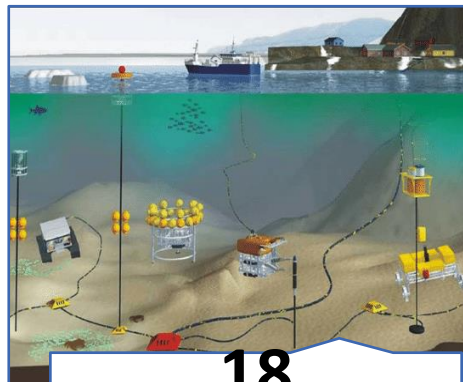
TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS (IN-PERSON OR REMOTE)



38
Research stations



12
Polar vessels



18
Observatories



4 Ice and sediment
core repositories

VIRTUAL ACCES



7 Data
infrastructures

Combined, integrated, challenged-based TA to unique portfolio of RIs
5927 units of in-person and remote access offered in 2024-2028

POLARIN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE



CCGS Amundsen, CA



Arni Fridriksson, IS



RV Celtic Explorer, IR



MV Le Commandant Charcot, FR



RV Dana, DK



RV Kronprins Haakon, NO



BIO Hespérides, ES



RS Karpuj, CL



RVIB Laura Bassi, IT



Noosfera, UA



PRV Polarstern, DE



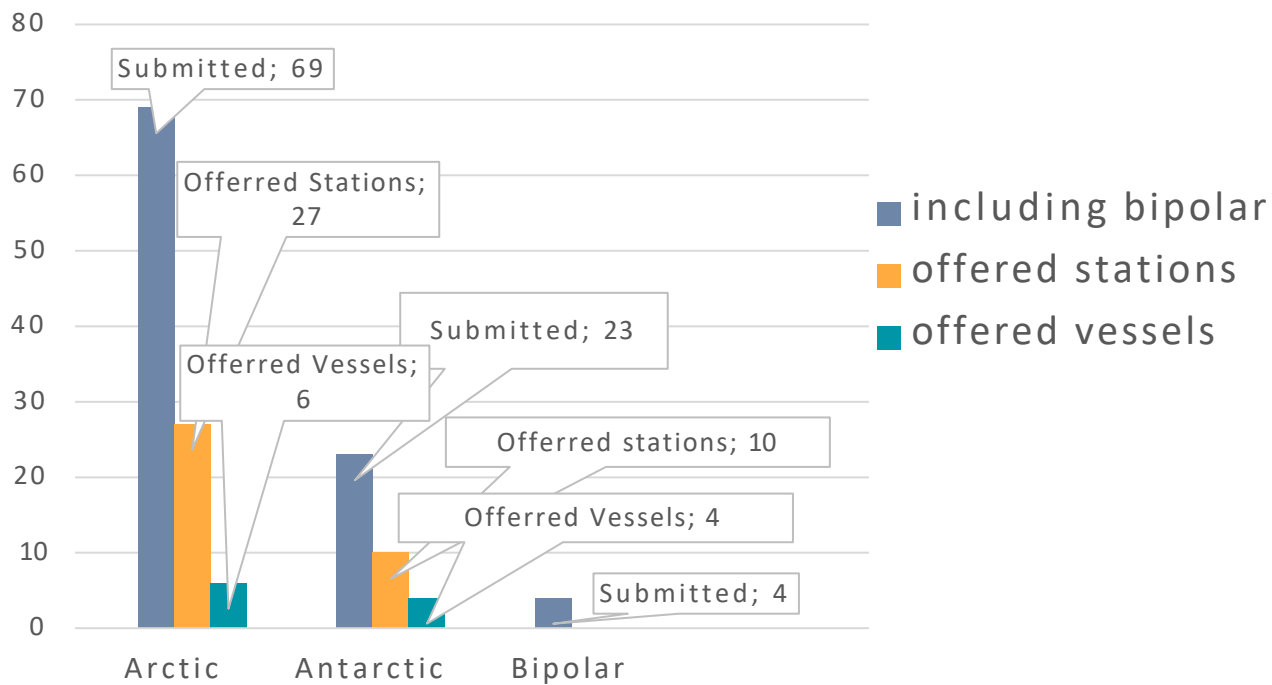
TARA polar station, FR



12
Polar vessels

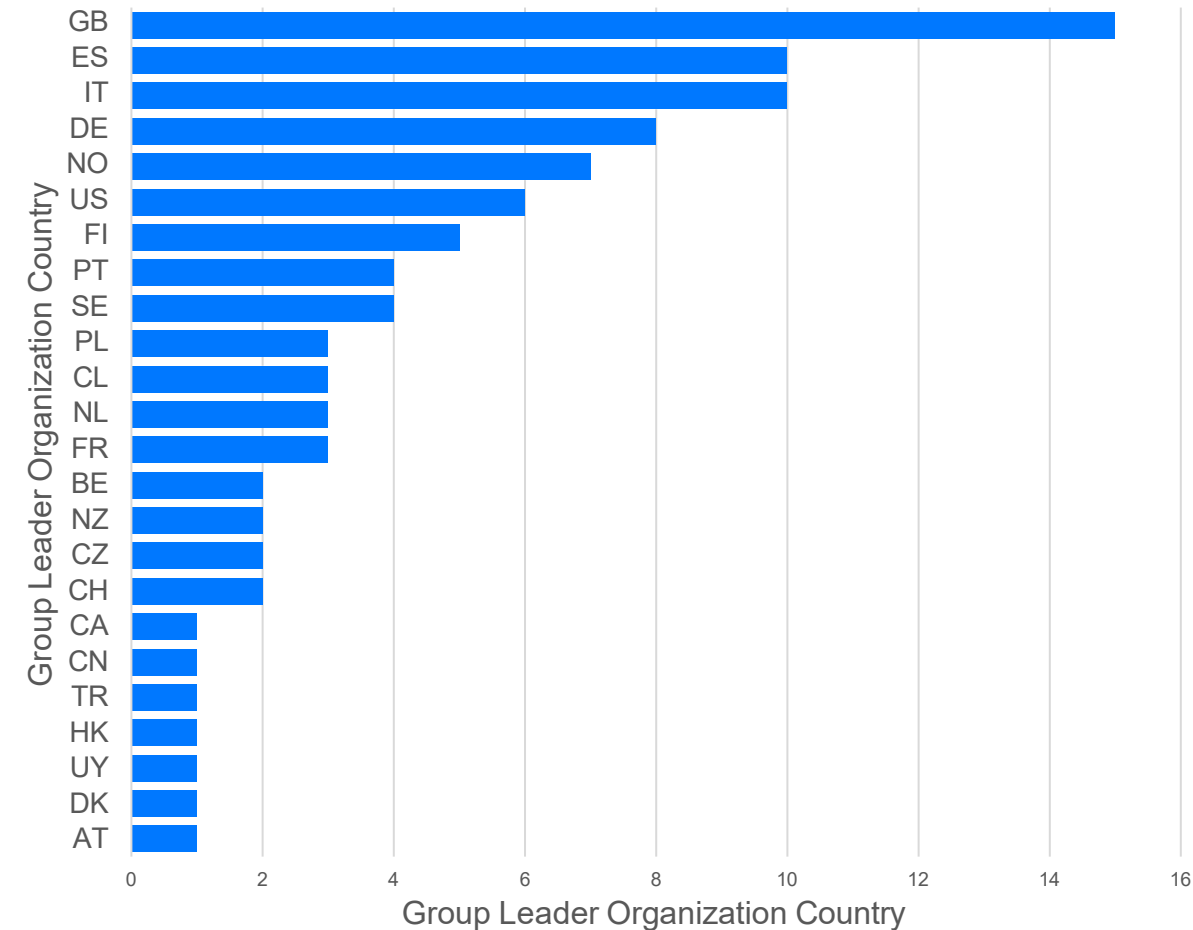
Success in Transnational Access

Overview POLARIN Call for Proposals 2024



- 1st POLARIN call open in Oct-Nov 2024
- Access offered to 49 RIs
- 96 proposals submitted, 86 eligible (24 countries)
- 4308 units requested (6% as RA, 94% TA)
- Requested: AC 1.5 M€, ODC 1.4 M€, total 2.9 M€
- 46 projects recommended for access (54%)
- 36 projects from 17 countries granted access to 26 RIs
- 1341 granted units
- Granted AC 1.2 M€, ODH 0.7 M€, total 1.9 M€
- Next Steps: Negotiation & Implementation

Success in Transnational Access

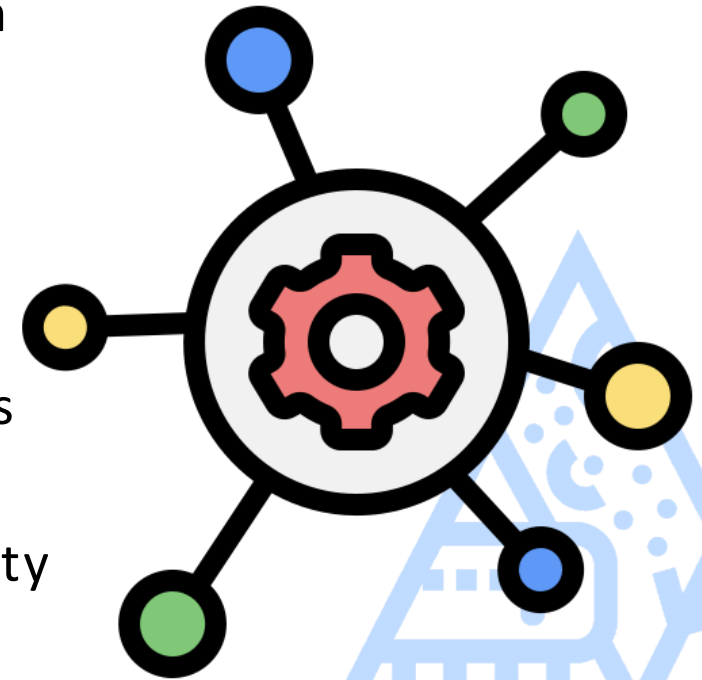


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Key Impact of POLARIN Year 1



- Scientific Impact: Strong demand for access to research infrastructures, with 96 proposals submitted in the first call
- Operational Impact: Provided streamlined access to polar research infrastructures
- Collaborative Impact: Strengthened partnerships across nations, institutions and research networks
- Public and Stakeholder Engagement: Increased visibility through participating in events, outreach activities, website, newsletters and social media



Next steps: Upcoming Milestones



TA to RIs

- M7. Launching 2nd call for proposals (planned Sept 2025)

Data management and access to data

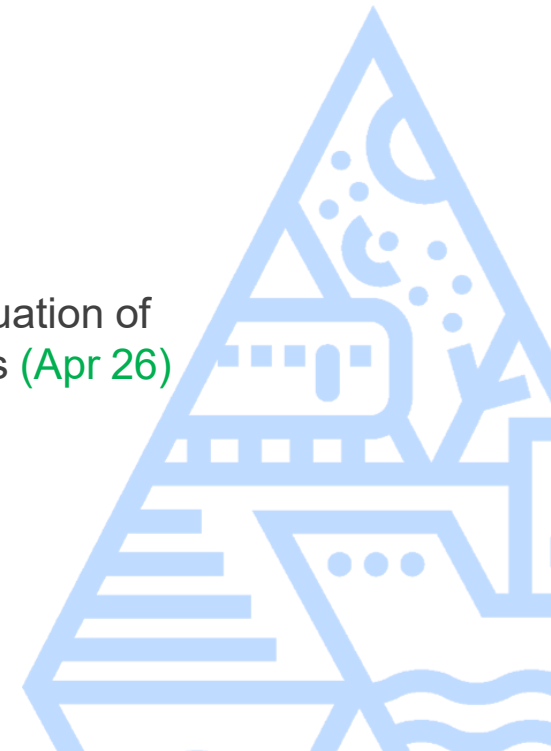
- M9. POLARIN web data portal implemented - *in progress*
- M11. VA portal established - *in progress*
- M12. First guidelines on the handling of data collected on transnational access- *in progress*

Training to RI users

- M13. First training course for POLARIN TA-users on optimal use of POLARIN RI's *in progress*

Project management

- M17. Mid-term retreat and internal evaluation of POLARIN's achievements and progress (Apr 26)



Collaboration & Key Interactions



European Space Agency (ESA)

- Joint effort to define key data needs for satellite calibration.
- Potential impact on improving polar remote sensing capabilities.



AQUARIUS Project

- Shared activities, e.g., joint booth at EGU2025.
- Synergies in research infrastructure access.



EU Polar Cluster

- Collaboration within the broader network of EU-funded polar research initiatives.
- Shared knowledge exchange and outreach activities.



Large Scale Initiatives

- Supporting the Antarctica InSync initiative.
- Offering RIs in the frame of InSync in the 2025 TNA call.



Contacts

Nicole Biebow
Project Coordinator

Nicole.Biebow@awi.de

Verónica Willmott
Project Manager

Veronica.Willmott@awi.de



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