NeIC Update Nov 2022

Friday 18 November
Online meeting

NeIC in a nutshell

- Hosted by NordForsk since 2012

- Funded by NordForsk and funding agencies from the member countries
  - Budget in 2022: 74 MNOK ~ 7,5 M€
  - Approximately one third of funding is in-kind

- Provides funding, management, a framework and a network
  for projects that improve digital infrastructure and research
  in the Nordic-Estonian region
  - One operational activity, several development projects
    and pre-studies working on various fields of science

Update from NeIC

Where we are now? What is to come?

Highlights in 2022

1. The NeIC 2022 Conference in Oslo on 30 May - 1 June
2. 10-year anniversary visible on neic.no
3. NeIC evaluation issued by NordForsk
4. New project, NordIQuEst, started in April
5. New project, Nordic Microdata Database, expected to start in December
6. Second phase of Puhuri and third phase of CodeRefinery
7. One pre-study started, two to start in 2022-23
8. A report that lays out the long-term impacts of NeIC

Status of long-term funding

- Contractual commitments:
  - Norway confirmed for 2023-24
  - Sweden confirmed 2023
  - Finland pending

NeIC Evaluation

- NeIC receives a **positive evaluation**

- The evaluators recommend
    - continued funding recommended
    - renewal of long-term agreements recommended
    - a Nordic e-Forum with national research councils, NordForsk and NeIC board

- NeIC's future will be discussed by the NordForsk board on 5 December

Outcome of NeIC2022

"Excellent and open research presupposes international collaboration and a high degree of internationalisation. **Collaboration is of great importance for research performing institutions. To be able to maintain quality and relevance, international contacts and networks are required.** Internationalisation of science is therefore an issue of great importance to the Swedish government.

The Ministerial Declaration Digital North 2.0 underpins the vision that the Nordic-Baltic region will become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world, by developing and using advanced digital technologies and data. This will be done in an ambitious, innovative, secure, and ethical manner to tackle large societal challenges. Open science and data-driven research will be a pillar in the concrete work."
– Swedish Minister for Education Anna Ekström, 31 May 2022

Opportunities

NeIC Expert Network on EU Collaboration

- An agile network of experts to scope interesting EU calls and roadmaps based on the synergies with NeIC's strategic objectives and common interests
- Experts from different national NeIC provider sites/ partners and other communities
- Coordinated by
  - **Jesse Oikarinen,** CSC: Administrative coordinator
  - **Abdulrahman Azab**, UiO/USIT: Technical coordinator

NeIC Expert Network on EU Collaboration

- NeIC prepares a <u>screening document</u> of the relevant upcoming calls
  - National providers and partners fill in their interests

Draft Call: HORIZON-INFRA-2023-EOSC-01-06: Trusted environments for sensitive data management in EOSC (RIA, 5M€ per project, 3 projects funded, 100% LUMP SUM funding, 22/12/2022-28/03/2023)

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Project results are expected to contribute to all the following expected outcomes:

- Expansion of EOSC's access to resources provided by public authorities, including national agencies, in highly sensitive areas, such as the health sector, governmental statistics or geo-spatial applications, that ensures the opening of these valuable data sets for novel research through a standard set of methods able to effectively enable sensitive data sharing/processing/analysis;

- Emergence of trusted environments for management and sharing of sensitive data in order to facilitate new ways of using sensitive data sets;

- Demonstration that FAIR data workflows with sensitive data are securely possible and can benefit both the data providers and the wider science community.\
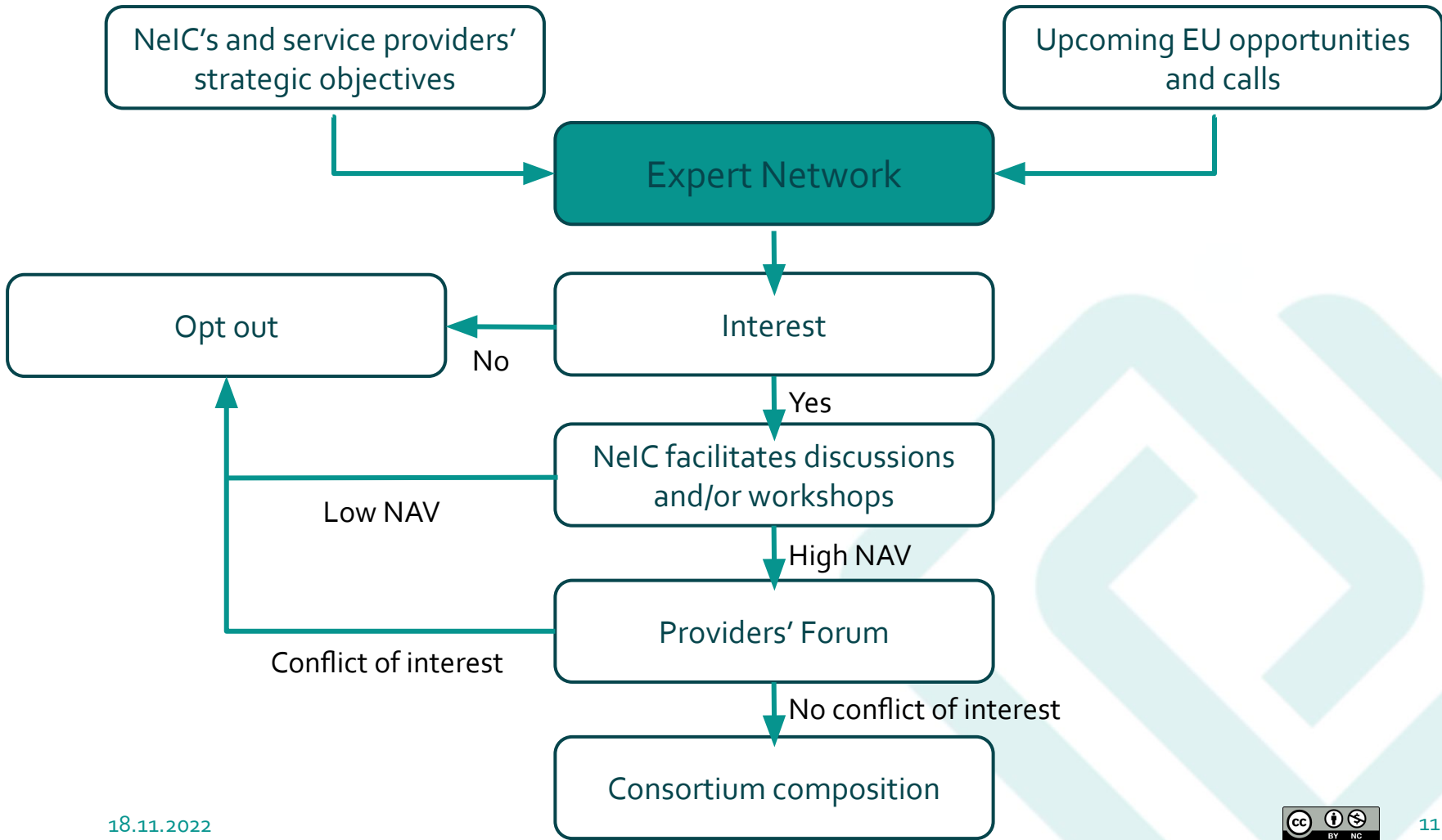
<u>Scope:</u> The data sets of public authorities are often very sensitive and therefore restricted. Sensitive data is not only offered by public authorities, but also commercial entities. It is vital for EOSC to enable its users to engage with such sensitive data sources.

Safe rooms, safe pods and secure remote access environments all present challenges to physical and logical security even within a single discipline, whilst transdisciplinary norms and transnational legislation present additional challenges. The providers of the sensitive data need environments with high standards of security and privacy guarantees that these datasets require. At the same time the solutions should enable easy access for users and offer practical solutions for working at large scale of data sources, computational resources, and users.

The aim of this topic is to develop and implement a robust set of methods, practices and environments to effectively enable sensible data sharing/processing. They should be general enough to be applicable in a certain country/region and in cross-border scenarios. Proposals should take into account the existing and forthcoming work and policies in the area (e.g. Medical Informatics Platform, European Health Data Space) but also engage with additional challenges and domains, for example where governmental statistical data or location and time sensitive data are required for analytics, machine learning and/or artificial intelligence.

Notes:

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Relevant activities & discussions

- Task force for porting WLCG jobs to LUMI
- EuroHPC containers forum: LUMI, LEONARDO, VEGA, KAROLINA, …
- EOSC-Nordic follow up:
    - Nordic sensitive data forum
    - FAIR Data activities
- Connections with EU bodies: NGC, Julich, Uni-Freiburg, BSC, CINECA, …
- Opportunities for constructive collaboration with EGI (for free)
    - DIRAC + ARC for different communities
    - EU calls