



e-shape

EuroGEOSS Showcases: Applications Powered by Europe

e-shape WP5 D5.1 on-boarding process refinement

e-shape





Abstract

The “On-boarding process refinement” defines and documents the process through which a new pilot can be on-boarded to become a new beneficiary of e-shape. Used internally to plan and execute actions, the on-boarding process is also a tool to engage with a potential future beneficiary of e-shape improving their understanding of requirements and expectations.

The process is composed of three phases: the Definition of the campaign, the Marketing campaign to attract new beneficiaries and the Implementation.

- The e-shape Executive Board will receive from the EuroGEO Coordination Group guidance for the potential future pilots to onboard on e-shape and will define the scope of the call to strengthen the consortium taken in account the guidance.
- Twice during the course of the project, the e-shape Communication Team will publish the marketing campaign to attract new beneficiaries and will collect the applications through the e-shape Helpdesk.
- The e-shape Executive Board will define a jury to evaluate the applications. Those meeting the criteria will be presented to the Executive Board who will be able to validate the jury recommendations and decide how many of the candidates could reasonably be on-boarded into the project.
- Those pilots approved by Executive Board will be notified and presented to the e-shape General Assembly which will vote to confirm the selection.
- Having signed the Consortium Agreement and being identified as a partner in the Grant Agreement, selected applicant will become an e-shape partner and share content to be advised on the e-shape platform and benefit from the e-shape ecosystem.

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EC Review comments implemented:

Comment	Answer	Implemented change
The selection process is only weakly identified: how and who to select the evaluators?	A jury composed of e-shape partners involved in the sustainability team (EVENFLOW, EARSC), e-shape’s Showcase leaders and experts (e-shape advisory board members) in the domain and PMT (Project Management Team) will evaluate the applications. During the General Assembly in October 2020 the five best applications on the ranking list will be presented for acceptance to the e-shape consortium.	5.3 Selection of applications
How will the evaluation be conducted? What are the evaluation criteria?	The Jury will consider the evaluation criteria reported in the Guide for Applicant: 1) Demonstrated potential and willingness to upscale, based on the elements listed by the “Application” section; 2)The strengthening and promotion of links between GEOSS and Copernicus, showcasing mutual benefits. This also includes European national contributions to and benefits from GEOSS; 3) The coordinated downstream data exploitation of European EO datasets available through the GEOSS (such as Copernicus data sets, data sets from the different European research infrastructures, citizen science initiatives, and national databases of in-situ observations); 4) Coherent data management, through the use of GEOSS Data Management Principles and best practices (INSPIRE-compliant); 5) Significant advances in Earth System Science modelling and downstream product development; 6) Capacity building among current and potential users; 7) Minimum Technology Readiness Level of 7 and clarity of plans to improve to 8/9.	5.3 Selection of applications
How to deal with conflict interests	For conflict of interests, if any, the parties (jury member or current e-shape partners) must formally notify to the European Commission (via the e-shape coordinator) without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The e-shape coordinator will verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.	5.7 Conflict/Claim
How will the individual criteria be weighted?	The Jury members fill in a scoring table that features the seven criteria (see section 5). They will make use also of the e-shape KPIs that will help benchmark the application proposals to the objectives of e-shape. Score is 0-5 and differs from criteria to criteria. The score assigned to each criterion will be summed. Applications with higher scores will be considered.	5.4 Confirmation of selected applicants
Artificial intelligence, blockchain, new data from satellite, airborne or in-situ sensor	The on-boarding process creates the condition to bring from the exterior further inputs, specifically the private investment sector supporting synergies among the different stakeholders for the greater value of EuroGEO. The on-boarding process is open to new development as the entities applying to the Call for EO-based products 2020 bring added value to the showcases through their services.	Introduction



1. Executive summary

The project e-shape includes provisions to enable new pilots to be introduced into the project during its lifetime. This will ensure that the process is “live”, and that does not conclude with the same 27 pilots with which it has started. This is known as the **on-boarding process**.

The goal of this document, the “on-boarding process refinement” is to define and document the process through which a new pilot can be on-boarded and become a new beneficiary of e-shape. Used internally to plan and execute actions, the on-boarding process is also a tool to engage with a potential future beneficiary of e-shape, improving their understanding of requirements and expectations.

The process is composed of three phases.

- The first phase is the “Definition of the campaign” initiated by guidance provided by the **EuroGEO Coordination Group**.
- The second phase is the “Marketing campaign to attract new beneficiaries” from the definition of the campaign to the selection of the beneficiary(ies) performed by the sustainability team with the support of e-shape Project Management Team and the communication team.
- The third and last phase is the “Physical implementation” to realize the integration of the new pilot. For each of these three phases, actions and the leader of the action are defined.

This document describes each of these phases and the processes which shall be followed. The document does not aim to detail all technical tasks which have been or will be described in other deliverables but to define a clear process identifying the interaction between actors and associated tasks to be set up and performed. This document will be reviewed and potentially updated regularly after each cycle of on-boarding to improve the process and, or, to follow technical developments. The final report is planned in month 44, December 2022.

2. Introduction

e-shape is a collaborative project to promote EU capabilities from Academy, Research and the commercial sector. e-shape is the European contribution to GEO, having partners of the most valuable project/initiatives in EU to exploit and promote Earth Observation (EO) assets, tools, methods and services. With its “showcase approach”, e-shape aims to improve the understanding of potential uses of EO, to have access to data repositories and tools, to provide information to purchase a service and to find a partner. The e-shape project aims to develop bridges between providers and users from EU or abroad.

The drastic increase in number of satellites, constellation, platforms and services made the EO ecosystem very dynamic. These new capabilities and the better understanding of the EO value on numerous markets or thematic generate new needs from potential users. To support this trend, e-shape integrates from the beginning an on-boarding process to integrate additional partners. Such process avoids a static situation where only those pilots which were onboarded at the proposal stage can provide products and services suited to operational environmental monitoring within the context of EuroGEO. Such process enables also the project to be connected with the new developments in data and in its processing into products and services (such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, new data from satellite, airborne or in-situ sensors, etc.)

The on-boarding process creates the condition to bring from the exterior further inputs, specifically the private investment sector supporting synergies among the different stakeholders for the greater value of EuroGEO. The on-boarding process is open to new development as the entities applying to the Call for EO-based products 2020 bring added value to the showcases through their services.

It allows new partners and especially those companies which are not familiar or have not been involved with GEO to join the effort and to provide their services. This has the benefit of bringing innovative external



solutions and private investments solutions, into the project. Public stakeholders may identify new requirements and for the project to bring them into its perimeter. These include results of the Copernicus Framework Partnership Agreement and especially the EC EuroGEO calls for expressions of intent leading to Action Groups. It will also increase synergies between several of the current initiatives i.e. DIAS, FPA's, Copernicus Services, GEOSS, Copernicus Accelerator etc. and between Copernicus and GEO institutional arrangements.

The goal of the “on-boarding process refinement” is to define and document the process to identify which value should be added in the project and how to onboard a new pilot to become a future beneficiary of e-shape. To be successful, **the on-boarding process shall be well-communicated, transparent, and inclusive.** e-shape on-boarding is defined by three main phases.

This document does not aim to detail all technical tasks which have been or will be described in other deliverables but to provide a clear understanding of the process which has to be set up and used. This document will be updated regularly to improve the process and, or, to follow technical developments. The final report is planned in month 44, December 2022.

3. Entities involved in the on-boarding process

The stakeholders of e-shape are numerous, located across Europe and outside. Several organisations are already part of the project and this number will be expanded through the on-boarding process. However, only a few shall be part of the on-boarding process to ensure focus and coherence to achieve its goal.

3.1. Internal contributor

- **e-shape consortium:** composed of the 54 partners of the consortium, that have already signed the Consortium Agreement of the e-shape project;
- **e-shape Executive Board (ExBo):** composed of the Project Management Team, the Work Packages Leaders and the Showcase Coordinators;
- **e-shape Advisory Board (AB):** composed of 12 experts and/or end-users in the field of the project who will not be part of the project as Participants.

3.2. External contributor

- **European Commission (EC):** represented by the EASME Project Officer;
- **GEO High Level Working Group (HLWG):** composed of European GEO Members and Participating Organization established as a regional coordination structure across Europe. It Coordinates the European contribution to GEO and oversee GEOSS's implementation from a European perspective;
- **EuroGEO Coordination Group:** co-chaired by the EC oversee the implementation of the EuroGEO strategic actions, assess progress against identified objectives and regularly report to the HLWG;
- **EuroGEO Action Group:** The Action Groups are voluntary bottom-up groups that are overseen by the EuroGEO Coordination Group, to either develop the selected EuroGEO application pilots or conduct other actions foreseen in the EuroGEO roadmap. These groups comprise representatives identified by the supporting Caucus' members depending on the relevance of their activities. The Action Groups report to the Coordination Group and, when appropriate, directly to the GEO HLWG.

4. Phase 1: Definition of the campaign

The definition of the campaign is the first phase of the on-boarding process. It is a crucial phase as it is the only time when external contributors, with the exception of the EASME PO, will have the opportunity to interact with the definition of the project and it will drive the whole process.



Figure 1: First phase of the on-boarding process

4.1. Collecting needs

The e-shape Executive Board will receive from the EuroGEO Coordination Group guidance for the potential future pilots to onboard on e-shape. These shall be high-level characteristics which will enable the project team to work to priorities largely agreed at European level.

4.2. Definition of the scope

The e-shape Executive Board will define the scope of the Marketing campaign which will promote the on-boarding opportunity with the overall goal to strengthen the consortium taken in account the guidance received.

The Sustainability Team will write the guide for applicants describing in detail the scope of the campaign, the conditions to become an e-shape partner and the benefits to be an e-shape partner.

4.3. Definition of the guide for applicants

The guide for applicants will present information needed for a potential applicant to apply in a fair and transparent way. It shall include:

- **Applicants eligibility:** this section will provide the potential applicant with the definition of eligible legal statuses and eligible countries. By default, the same definitions as published for the e-shape call should apply.
- **General information:** this section will provide the potential applicant with global information such as the official dates (e.g. launch and deadline of the campaign), the language and means of submission (e.g. the e-shape Help Desk web platform).
The general information will highlight that onboarded pilots will be funded but not for development. Onboarded pilots will benefit from the e-shape project support for outreach including focused workshops and access to the sustainability booster. Becoming part of an H2020 project, the applicant will be asked to acknowledge that financial H2020 rules will apply. H2020 financial rules can be added in annex or as a link to a webpage or document.
- **e-shape benefits:** this section will inform the potential applicant with the benefits the future e-shape partner will have access to if they are selected for on-boarding.
- **Application process:** this section will present the different steps to become an e-shape partner:
 - Step 1: Application type (e.g. formal proposal with predefined sections);
 - Step 2: evaluation and selection by a jury;
 - Step 3: presentation to the e-shape consortium and vote;
 - Step 4: Finalization of the campaign including the signature of the Consortium Agreement;
 - Step 5: physical implementation on the e-shape web platform.
- **Criteria:** this section will describe the criteria used to evaluate the applicants. **The e-shape Executive Board will validate the criteria to evaluate applications before the launch of each campaign. Criteria will be accessible to any applicant during the campaign.** Criteria used to evaluate the applicants shall be aligned with the EuroGEO aim which are to develop operational EO services with and for the users and

to create a conducive environment whereby the strengths of Europe are exploited towards addressing societal challenges, fostering entrepreneurship and supporting sustainable development through the address of the three main priorities of GEO (SDGs, Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework). Criteria will follow e-shape requirements (e.g. KPIs, adoption of the GEO data management principles, legal elements related to the Grant Agreement, Consortium Agreement). At least **one of the criteria will follow the evaluation of the Pilot Exploitation Readiness Level (PERL)**. The PERL ascertains where pilots sit on the process of sustainability, which in turn determines which sort of support they will need to move onward towards commercial maturity. The applicant must show that it has sufficient financial backing to be sustainable independent of e-shape.

- **Responsibilities:** this section will present the obligations of partners being part of an H2020 project including the conflict of interest, the confidentiality, the traceability of use of funds, the promotion of the project and the visibility to the EU funding.

5. Phase 2: Marketing campaign to attract new beneficiaries

The second phase of the on-boarding process is the marketing campaign to attract new partners:



Figure 2: Second phase of the on-boarding process

Candidates for on-boarding will be considered annually and are expected to come from many sources e.g.:

- The Copernicus accelerator;
- New ideas are to be sought by DG RTD EuroGEO initiative call for expressions for intent and the Action Groups;
- Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA's) between the EC and Member States;
- Commercial and institutional R&D activity outside of GEOSS and Copernicus including projects resulting from call H2020 SC5-16-2019 subtopic b.

5.1. Publication of the invitation

The Communication Team will publish the invitation with the definition of the scope of work and the content of the Guide for Applicants under the responsibility of the WP Leader supervision of the Project Management Team. The Communication team will:

- prepare the e-shape Help Desk web platform space for the applicant to register on the web-platform.
- define the communication channels to attract potential targeted partners.

The e-shape communication team will perform communication and dissemination actions.

5.2. Collection of proposals and eligibility

Applicants will use the e-shape Help Desk (<https://helpdesk.e-shape.eu/>) to submit their application:

- Select the "Submit A Request" tab,
- Fill in the Request Form,
- Chose under "About which project is your request?" the tab "on-boarding",
- Attach the application form in pdf format and submit.



The e-shape WP Leader will receive the applications.

Once the on-boarding call has closed, the WP Leader will make a first eligibility check.

The e-shape WP Leader will inform the applicant on the status of his application:

- eligibility passed and under evaluation or
- eligibility rejected. If the application is rejected, the e-shape WP Leader will inform the applicant on the reason(s) sending a report on the eligibility check.

The WP Leader will share with the jury the eligible applications.

5.3. Selection of applications

For each campaign, the WP Leader will define a jury. The jury will consist of two representatives from the sustainability team (EVENFLOW, EARSC), the seven showcase representatives, two experts from the e-shape Advisory board, - one technical and one strategic-, and the Project Management Team. The jury will evaluate the applications based on the criteria defined in the Guide for Applicants:

1. Compliance with the e-shape's KPIs
2. Demonstrated potential and willingness to upscale, based on the elements listed by the "Application" section,
3. The strengthening and promotion of links between GEOSS and Copernicus, showcasing mutual benefits. This also includes European national contributions to and benefits from GEOSS,
4. The coordinated downstream data exploitation of European EO datasets available through the GEOSS (such as Copernicus data sets, data sets from the different European research infrastructures, citizen science initiatives, and national databases of in-situ observations),
5. Coherent data management, using GEOSS Data Management Principles and best practices (INSPIRE-compliant),
6. Significant advances in Earth System Science modelling and downstream product development,
7. Capacity building among current and potential users,
8. Minimum Technology Readiness Level of 7 and clarity of plans to improve to 8/9.

The jury will provide the WP Leader with their scorings. The scores will be averaged and ranked.

During the General Assembly in October 2020 the five best applications on the ranking list will be presented for acceptance to the e-shape consortium.

5.4. Confirmation of selected applications

The applications that match the criteria will be presented to the e-shape Executive Board who will be able to validate the jury recommendations and decide how many of the applicants could reasonably be on-boarded into the project (5)

The WP Leader will:

- Inform on the finding (best practices, guidelines) of the project to those not meeting the criteria or not selected. They will not have access to the e-shape support services but; e-shape will keep engaging also with those entities that have not passed the first on-boarding process, and connected to the EuroGEO ecosystem as there will also be a second call in 2021.



- In the exploratory calls from the potential entities for the Call for EO-based products 2020 high attention is given to the links with GEO, making the applicants aware of this important user community reality.
- Deliver the badge to fully funded pilots which will be allowed to participate to the non-funded support offered by the project i.e. to join project workshops and communications e.g. pilots funded under the FPA scheme where they will already have backing of their home Member State. In this case, it could also be possible to agree a shared-funding such that the FPA and the e-shape support together are enough to make the pilot sustainable.
- Notify those approved. The selected applicants have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement in order to access the Grant Agreement and the e-shape Consortium Agreement.

The Project Management Team will:

- Organize the final voting towards the General Assembly of e-shape.
- Send out to the new pilots the NDA as soon as they are confirmed by the e-shape General Assembly.
- Organize the signing of the necessary contractual documents for the administrative on-boarding of the Pilot.

How will the individual criteria be weighted?

The Jury members fill in a scoring table that features the seven criteria (see section 5). They will make use also of the e-shape KPIs that will help benchmark the application proposals to the objectives of e-shape. Score is 0-5 and differs from criteria to criteria.

The score assigned to each criterion will be summed. Applications with higher scores will be considered.

5.5. e-shape General Assembly vote

Approved applicants by the e-shape Executive Board will be presented to the e-shape General Assembly. *e-shape General Assembly will vote to select the on-boarding applicant. 66% of positive responses from e-shape General Assembly is needed to finalize the selection.*

5.6. Amendment of the Grant Agreement

When the selected applicant has signed the Consortium Agreement, the e-shape Project Management Team will request an amendment of the Grant Agreement to the European Commission.

When signed, the onboarded pilot will become part of an existing or newly created Showcase and will have access to the full e-shape projects' support including co-design, deployment support, user' uptake, capacity building, communication and dissemination, and sustainability booster. Indeed, the on-boarding process will be a good test of the booster and provide views and indications on its long-term viability for which a business plan will be generated during the project (see WP5).

5.7. Conflict/claim

The decision of the jury or the e-shape General Assembly is the final one. Particular attention will be paid on conflict for interests. If any, the parties (jury member or current e-shape partners) must formally notify to the European Commission (via the e-shape coordinator) without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The e-shape coordinator will verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

6. Phase 3: "implementation

The third phase of the on-boarding process is the Implementation of the new pilot. It aims to collect information needed to integrate the new pilot in the e-shape consortium and tools.



Figure 3: Third phase of the on-boarding process

6.1. Kick off meeting

When the new partner has signed the Grant Agreement, the e-shape Project Management Team and the Sustainability Team will present the e-shape value offer and the steps to finalize the on-boarding. The kick-off meeting will allow to describe:

- The co-design activity
- The showcases
- The users' uptake
- The capacity building and liaison
- The sustainability & up-scaling
- The communication, dissemination
- The Help Desk
- Events

6.2. e-shape catalogue data preparation

The e-shape Communication Team will provide the new partner with the template used to display Pilots on the e-shape website. The template describes the list of content (text, illustrations) needed.

- Showcase definition: text, number of words
- Pilots:
 - Text, number of words
 - Objectives
 - Partners involved in the Pilot
 - Key Users
 - Key datasets

The new partner will send the content to the e-shape Communication Team.

6.3. Pilot integration

The e-shape Communication Team will integrate the content received and share the visualization with the new partner.

6.4. Pilot integration feedback

When the on-boarding is over, the Sustainability Team will send to the new partner a form to fill to evaluate the on-boarding process. The answer will help to identify points of progress in order to define the more appropriate process which will be describe in the interim and final review of on-boarding process as applied to new pilots (month 18 and 42).

7. Summary of the Process

- The e-shape Executive Board will receive from the EuroGEO Coordination Group guidance for the potential future pilots to onboard on e-shape and will define the scope of the call to strengthen the consortium taken in account the guidance.
- Twice during the course of the project, the e-shape Communication Team will publish the marketing campaign to attract new beneficiaries and will collect the applications through the e-shape Helpdesk.
- The e-shape Executive Board will define a jury to evaluate the applications. Those meeting the criteria will be presented to the Executive Board who will be able to validate the jury recommendations and decide how many of the candidates could reasonably be on-boarded into the project.
- Those pilots approved by Executive Board will be notified and presented to the e-shape General Assembly which will vote to confirm the selection.
- Having signed the Consortium Agreement and being identified as a partner in the Grant Agreement, selected applicant will become an e-shape partner and share content to be advised on the e-shape platform and benefit from the e-shape ecosystem.

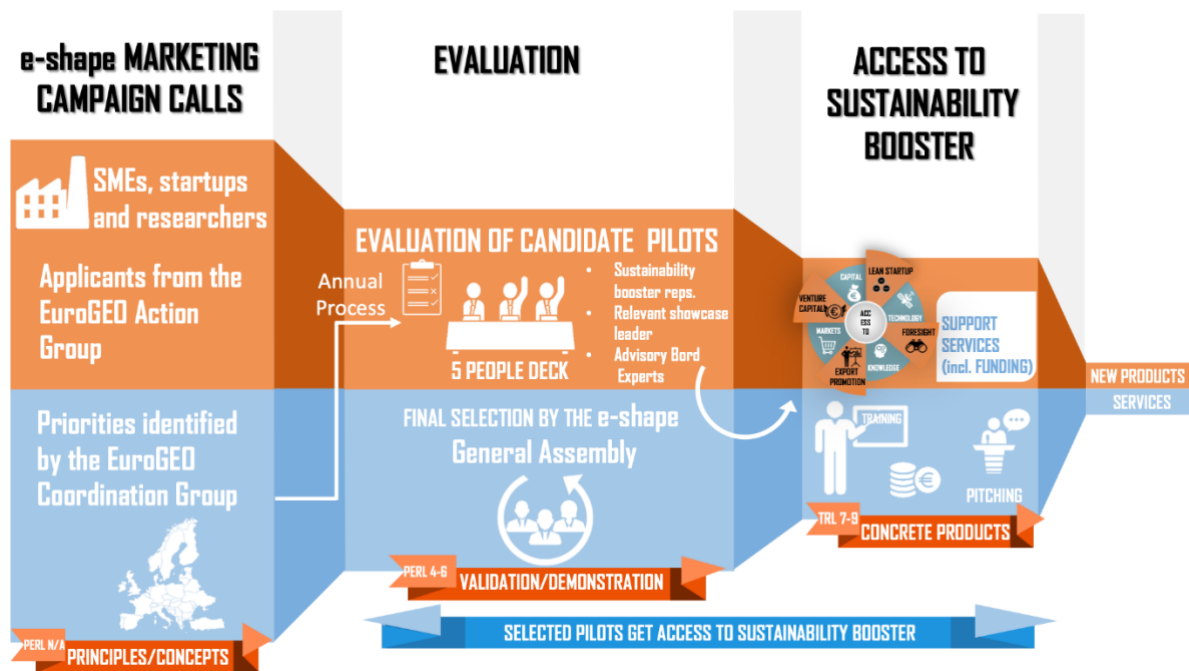


Figure 4: on-boarding process