



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Acknowledgements

2023

ESF Annual Report

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2023 at a glance

Grant Evaluation

- 45 competitive call evaluations supported
- 4700+ applications assessed
- 10 300+ assessment reports by Expert Reviewers and Review Panel members

Scientific networks and structures

- 10 Scientific networks and structures hosted and operated
- 2 of these platforms operated for the first time in 2023

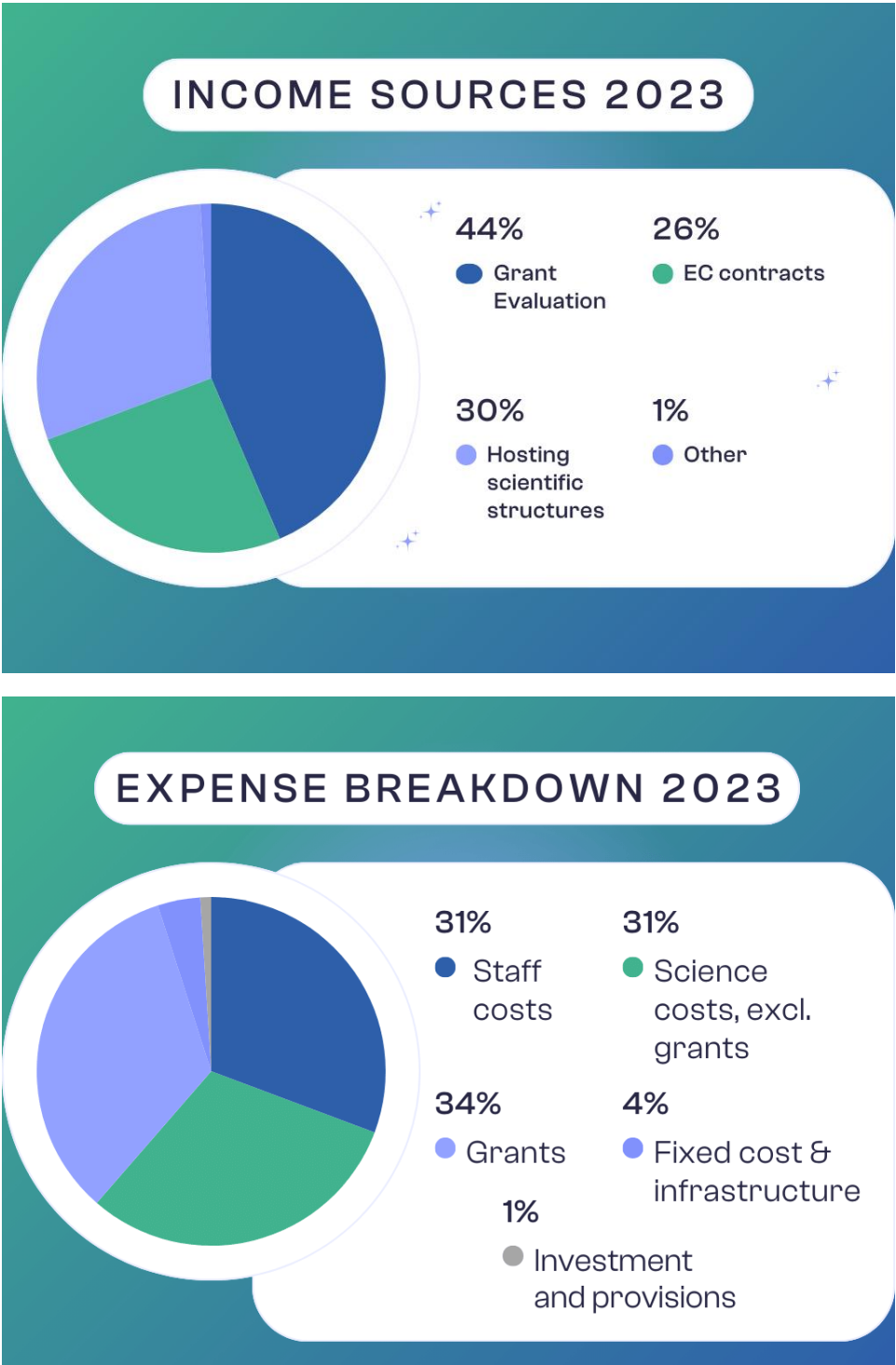
EU-funded projects

- 22 EU-funded projects in progress
- 11 new projects started in 2023

Staff members

- 46 staff members: 31% increase since 2022.

Financial overview



Executive Board members

- **Véronique Halloin, president**
Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS)
- **Eva Pacheva, vice-president**
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- **Marc Schiltz**
Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR)
- **Matthias Girod**
Euroscience

Member organisations

BELGIUM	Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS)	Associate member
BULGARIA	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)	Full member
FRANCE	EuroScience	Full member
FRANCE	Core Technologies for Life Sciences (CTLS)	Associate member
FRANCE	French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (Ifremer)	Associate member
HUNGARY	Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)	Associate member
LUXEMBOURG	Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR)	Full member
ROMANIA	National Council for Scientific Research (CNCS)	Associate member
SERBIA	Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts	Associate member
TURKEY	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK)	Associate member

ESF's Strategy: Mission and Lines of Action

Advancing high-quality research through expert, independent management and support

ESF is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to advancing high-quality research across Europe and beyond since 1974. As a global connector of research stakeholders, ESF offers expert, independent management and expert support throughout the entire research lifecycle—from conception and implementation to evaluation, sustainability, and impact.

Operating across diverse scientific networks, funding programs, and EU-funded projects, we specialise in research assessment, grant evaluation, and comprehensive support activities—spanning scientific, operational, communication, administrative, and financial management.

Driven by a dynamic, highly skilled, and international team, ESF is dedicated to fostering innovative solutions to enhance the impact of research worldwide.

Our Four Lines of Action

For the next five years (2023 – 2028), ESF aims to develop its activities around four lines of action, designed to amplify the work and impact of research stakeholders across Europe and beyond:

- Research Quality Assessment and Grant Evaluation
- Supporting and Hosting Scientific Structures and Networks
- Management of Co-funded Research Programmes
- Strengthening EU-funded projects

ESF's strategy includes further development and strengthening of these lines of action, in order to generate a critical mass of activities and bring ESF to become recognised as the not-for-profit European high-quality science management provider by the end of the decade.

Read our Strategy at www.esf.org

Research Quality Assessment and Grant Evaluation

We ensure independent research assessment and grant evaluation in line with international standards.

Supporting research funders, universities and programmes in identifying the best research is one of our key priorities. Leveraging our extensive College of over 10,000 Expert Reviewers, this includes carrying out independent scientific assessment of research proposals, fellowship applications and promotion of researchers, resulting in the provision of quality- controlled assessment reports and/or ranking lists.

2023 in figures

In 2023, ESF successfully supported the **evaluation of 45 Competitive Calls for projects**, involving the assessment of **4 700+ applications** and the provision of **10 300+ assessment reports** by Expert Reviewers and Review Panel members. 62% of these expert assessments were provided by members of the ESF Community of Experts.

2023 Missions highlights

In 2023, ESF established new grant evaluation partnerships, supporting the evaluation of funding calls from the A*Midex Foundation of the Aix-Marseille University (France), the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, the Young Universities of the Future of Europe (YUFE) Alliance and several other MSCA co-funded programmes for early-career researchers.

“University of Antwerp has collaborated with ESF for the external peer-review, part of the multi-layered selection procedure for the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Cofund project YUFE4Postdocs](#). In the two calls launched (2023), ESF ensured a timely and highly qualitative mission, which eased my life as coordinator! We were pleased with the professionalism and diligence of the ESF team, and for their support and advice in running this large exercise.

Anne Adams
Coordinator YUFE4Postdocs,
Head of Unit, Grants Office - University of Antwerp

“Région Bretagne relied on the support of the European Science Foundation (ESF) to conduct scientific evaluations for the MSCA Cofund BIENVENÜE programme calls 2022 and 2023, from the search of experts, their recruitment to the production of evaluations. ESF successfully and timely implemented our programme-tailored process. The appropriateness of recruited experts and high-quality of provided evaluations were noticed by the BIENVENÜE selection panel and the applicants.”

Anne-Laure Baudrier
Head of the Research & Higher Education Office
Region Bretagne

Supporting and Hosting Scientific Structures and Networks

ESF serves as a vital hub for scientific collaboration by providing a home for the operations of various scientific networks, coalitions, committees, and associations. Our role goes beyond mere hosting; we create an environment where these entities can thrive and maximise their impact on the research landscape.

Throughout 2023, ESF has provided tailored secretariat services, from general administration to coordination of activities, communication support, as well as financial and contract management, allowing these entities to concentrate on their core activities and make a significant impact. From space sciences and radio-astronomy frequencies to nuclear physics and Open Access, ESF has been at the forefront of fostering collaboration and driving advancements in these domains.

New structures hosted in 2023

Association of ERC Grantees (AERG)



The Association of ERC Grantees (AERG) amplifies the voice of ERC grant holders, fostering a science-based community, advocating for excellent, bottom-up, and frontier science funding, and promoting the societal benefits of funding fundamental, high-risk, high-gain scientific research.

ESF has set up a partnership to support the operations of AERG, mainly focused on supporting the Board's activities, contributing to the organisation of their activities, supporting the relations with the members and supporting communication.

In 2023, this support included organising the inaugural “Recognizing Excellence in Research” event, which featured distinguished guests such as the ERC President and Nobel Laureates. ESF also facilitated the launch of AERG’s “Special Interest Groups,” enabling knowledge exchange across diverse scientific fields. By supporting communication efforts, drafting press materials, and advising on event organisation, ESF has expanded AERG’s reach, enhanced its operations, and strengthened its impact on the scientific community.

Find out more: www.aerg.eu/

European Facility for Airborne Research (EUFAR)



EUFAR (European Facility for Airborne Research) is an association established in 2018 as a follow-up to a European Commission-funded research network. It aims to support and promote airborne research by providing access to national research aircraft and instruments for scientists across Europe.

In 2023, ESF provided essential support for EUFAR's governance, communication, and financial management. ESF maintained EUFAR's website and social media, ensuring timely updates and effective stakeholder communication. Financial tasks included managing accounts, presenting financial reports at the General Assembly, reimbursing activity expenses, and collecting membership fees.

ESF also participated in an EC grant application within a consortium of European partners, proposing a new research infrastructure for the global airborne research community. ESF led efforts on sustainability and governance scenarios and contributed to communication activities, reinforcing its commitment to advancing EUFAR's mission in airborne research.

Find out more: www.eufar.net/

2023 Highlights in Supporting and Hosting Scientific Structures and Networks

cOAlition S



cOAlition S is an international consortium of research funders launched in 2018 to implement Plan S, an initiative for Open Access publishing. The cOAlition S is hosted and administered by ESF.

Plan S at 5

2023 marked the 5th anniversary of the announcement of Plan S in 2018. cOAlition S hosted an online webinar bringing together funders, researchers, and experts from the scholarly communication field to discuss how Plan S has developed since its launch as well as what lies ahead for the future of scholarly communication. The panellists acknowledged the pivotal role Plan S played in increasing the share of Open Access (OA) outputs and aligning OA policies worldwide. According to them, the key drivers of that success were the concerted actions of funders, their openness to community input, and their flexibility in adjusting Plan S policies as needed to ensure greater equity and fairness. However, the consensus prevailed that there is still a lot of work to do to make all research Open Access and foster a fairer, more reliable, and efficient scholarly communication that is also inclusive and sustainable.

Find out more: www.coalition-s.org/5-years-of-plan-s-webinar/

Supporting Equity in scholarly publishing

cOAlition S has commissioned a study to explore how a globally fair pricing system for open access academic publishing could be devised and implemented. The key objective of this study, to be published in early 2024, is to identify ways in which readers and producers of scholarly publications could financially contribute to supporting the academic publishing services valued by their research communities as a function of their means in a manner that is globally equitable and sustainable.

Going for Diamond

Diamond Open Access refers to a scholarly publication model in which journals and platforms do not charge fees to either authors or readers. Diamond Open Access journals are community-driven, academic-led, and academic-owned equitable publishing initiatives. cOAlition S increasingly supports non-commercial, community-owned models. With like-minded partners, we co-create and promote a set of actions to strengthen Diamond Open Access and help advance fair and equitable scholarly publishing.

The diamond highlight of the year was the [October 2023 Global Summit on Diamond Open Access](#), organised in Toluca (México) by Redalyc, UAEMéx, AmeliCA, UNESCO, CLACSO, UÓR, ANR, cOAlition S, OPERAS, and Science Europe. This event brought together the community of researchers, editors, universities, research funding and performing organisations, academic libraries, learned societies, and policy makers who are engaged worldwide in strengthening the Diamond Open Access ecosystem. The objective of the Global Summit was to encourage a deeper understanding and mutual learning between world regions and develop common global principles.

Ending support for Transformative arrangements

Transformative Agreements and Transformative Journals were developed to encourage subscription journals to transition to full and immediate open access within a defined timeframe (31st December 2024, as specified in the Plan S Implementation Guidance). In January 2023 leadership of cOAlition S reaffirmed that, as a principle, its members will no longer financially support these arrangements after 2024. Instead, cOAlition S members will direct their efforts to more innovative and community-led Open Access publishing initiatives that aim to deliver full and immediate Open Access in a shorter timeframe. The reason for this is that maintaining these arrangements beyond 2024 would significantly increase the risk that they become permanent and perpetuate hybrid Open Access, which cOAlition S has always firmly opposed.

The future of scholarly publishing and cOAlition S after 2024

2023 was an important year to start working on a way forward for the consortium and for scholarly communication after 2024, that builds on the results of Plan S and leads towards a more responsible publishing system that allows full and immediate Open Access, that is author-led, and in which all scholarly outputs are eligible for consideration in research assessment.

To this end, cOAlition S launched two processes:

- **An independent review of Plan S** with the aim to assess the impact that Plan S has had on the scholarly communication ecosystem and on facilitating research to be published Open Access. The study was run by scidecode consultancy and anticipated to deliver its insights in 2024 about the effectiveness of cOAlition S in achieving its objectives and provide actionable recommendations to improve and expand upon these.
- **A consultation with the research community regarding our “Towards Responsible Publishing” proposal**, run by Research Consulting in partnership with the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) at Leiden University. The outcomes of this consultation, and the consequent recommendations will help us refine our proposal to successfully deliver an open, scholar-led communication ecosystem that removes barriers to participation for the benefit of science and society. More information can be found on the website: www.coalition-s.org/towards-responsible-publishing

Find out more: www.coalition-s.org/plan-s-annual-review-2023/

Coalition for the Advancement of Research Assessment - CoARA



Hosted by ESF - elected as its secretariat - since December 2022, CoARA is a global initiative focused on improving research assessment. CoARA's vision is that the assessment of research, researchers and

research organisations recognises the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research. This requires assessments primarily based on qualitative judgement, for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators. Each CoARA member is expected to implement an action plan towards changing their practices following the ten commitments establishing a common direction for research assessment reform and listed in the [Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#). The Coalition has been set to facilitate information and sharing of practices and eventually help members to reach their objectives.

By end of 2023, **565 members and 644 signatories** belonged to the coalition, including members from the US, Australia or the Global South.

Main actions and progress in 2023 included:

- Setting up of the Coalition Steering Board and ramp-up of its activities;
- Calling for additional capacity to support the secretariat
- Development of the CoARA Boost proposal (Horizon Europe CSA) aimed at providing operational capacity to the Coalition and to develop a cascade funding programme, which successfully secured funding. ESF is coordinator with eight other partners. 5M€ project for three years (3.9M€ for ESF inc. 2.75M€ for cascade funding). A kick-off event of the CoARA Boost project was organised on 7-8th December 2023
- Development and opening of a call for Working Group and National Chapters – 38 Expressions of interest received. Organisation of a 250+ participant brokerage event to progress towards more mature and inclusive Working Groups
- Definition of the early elements of the CoARA globalisation strategy
- Preparation of the members action plan framework

- Organising CoARA's General Assembly meeting on 15 December 2023
- Opening the call for Steering Board members
- Concluding the first call and evaluation process for Working Group and National Chapters: out of 39 Expression of Interests received, the Steering Board selected 10 Working Groups for within this first call
- Operational support to Working Groups and the increasing number of National Chapters (9 in total as of October 2023)
- Organising the second call for Working Groups, and of a 250+ participant brokerage event to progress towards more mature and inclusive Working Groups
- Publishing support guidelines for members and signatories to create their action plans, setting up the infrastructure for their publications, first action plans received
- Contributing to the CoARA globalisation strategy and liaising with global actors such as DORA, UNESCO, Wellcome Trust, the Centre for Open Science or NASA TOPS
- Outreach activities, participation at online and face-to-face scholarly meetings
- Planning CoARA events (online, face-to-face)
- Supporting the work of the Steering Board (preparing 3-weekly meetings, documents for the meetings, event invitations etc.) and strategic planning for CoARA
- Ongoing Communication and dissemination actions.

Find out more: www.coara.eu/

Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies (CRAF)



The Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies (CRAF), hosted by ESF since 1988, plays a pivotal role in safeguarding radio frequencies for European radio astronomy observatories and research institutes.

In 2023, CRAF actively participated in international (ITU-R), European (CEPT/ECC), and national spectrum management discussions, submitting compatibility studies and regulatory proposals. Key achievements include successful contributions to the ITU-R's Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM) Report for WRC-23 and advocating for a new Agenda Item at WRC-27 to protect radio astronomy from satellite constellations.

CRAF conducted groundbreaking measurements detecting unintended emissions from Starlink satellites, gaining widespread media attention. It also engaged in international forums, such as the IAU Symposium on satellite mega-constellations. Additionally, CRAF published its self-evaluation report on arXiv and welcomed Kartverket (Norwegian Mapping Agency) as a full member.

CRAF continues to address challenges like UWB radar interference, lunar radio astronomy protection, and satellite aggregation effects, ensuring robust advocacy for European radio astronomy's spectrum needs.

Find out more: www.craf.eu/

Core Technologies for Life Sciences (CTLS)



CTLS is a networking non-profit association that brings together scientists, technical and administrative staff working across the world in core facilities, research infrastructures and other shared resource laboratories. It provides a platform for networking, discussion on emerging technologies and exchange information on best practices. It also supports the career development of members throughout their careers.

In partnership with CTLS, ESF provides essential support, including membership management, financial consulting, and streamlining payment processes for European partners. We enhance CTLS's digital presence by supporting website management, researching hosting options, and coordinating with the webmaster. ESF also facilitates administrative and operational activities, ensuring CTLS delivers efficient services to its members.

Find out more: www.ctls-org.eu/

European Astrobiology Institute (EAI)



The EAI is a consortium of European research and higher education institutions and organisations, as well as other stakeholders, aiming to carry out research, training, outreach and dissemination activities in astrobiology in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, thereby securing a leading role for the European Research Area in the field. Alongside the financial and administrative management of the EAI and its management committees, ESF also supports its communication activities, including event organisation.

In addition to administrative support, the ESF led on behalf of EAI the organisation, communication, and logistics of the first Biennial European Astrobiology Conference (BEACON) in La Palma, Canary Islands, 8 – 12 May 2023. With over 250 participants, 200 abstracts submitted, 3 poster sessions, 4 full days of qualitative scientific programme, and coverage by leading magazines, BEACON proved to be a milestone for the institute. ESF also helped the EAI members to organise 3 Summer Schools, including field trips, excursions and visits in Nördlingen and in the Azores.

Find out more: www.europeanastrobiology.eu/

European space science committee (ESSC)



The ESSC strives to be Europe's reference body for independent expertise on matters of space science, acting as a representative voice of the European space science community and promoting international cooperation in the field.

ESF has supported the ESSC in organising its annual plenary meeting in Lisbon (June 2023) and coordinated several ESSC activities, including representation at the 2023 ESA Council meeting, panel workshops, and secretariat support for ESSC panels and the Chair. ESF is also

managing the search for a new ESSC Chair, with results expected in early 2024. The ESSC evaluated the 2023 ESA/EGU Earth Observation Awards and will oversee the 2024–2026 awards. ESA tasked ESF/ESSC with a survey of EU research institutions on Mars sample return analysis. This includes researcher interviews to assess the field's status and future trajectory, concluding in early 2024.

Find out more: www.essc.esf.org/

Europlanet Society



The Europlanet Society promotes the advancement of European planetary science and related fields for the benefit of the community.

ESF contributed to the organisation of the Europlanet RI Meeting in Bratislava (June 2023), which gathered a range of planetary science and Europlanet community workshops, organising the Society's activities there and facilitating discussion. ESF also helped organise an outreach stand for Europlanet Society at Fantasy Basel (May 2023), a large outreach event in Switzerland, gathering over 50,000 visitors.

ESF has continued to support the Europlanet Society by managing its websites, membership system, newsletters, and messaging. ESF also set up a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to manage the Europlanet Society membership, including a dedicated mailing system. This open-source CRM system (CiviCRM) could be deployed in the future for other expert boards and projects.

Find out more: www.europlanet.org/

The Nuclear Physics European Collaboration Committee (NuPECC)



NuPECC aims at developing the strategy for European cooperation in nuclear science by supporting collaborative ventures between research groups within Europe and promoting nuclear physics and its trans-disciplinary use in applications for societal benefit.

Key 2023 highlights included the development of the NuPECC Long Range Plan (LRP) 2024. Status reports were provided by all Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) in May and September, with first drafts submitted for the Recommendations Drafting Session held in October at GSI.

NuPECC welcomed Ukraine as a new member and co-organized a workshop on nuclear data planning with the IAEA, culminating in a Side Event at the 67th IAEA General Conference. NuPECC also hosted a joint workshop on computing with ECFA and APPEC in Bologna (June) and began hosting the EURASIS project website. Preparations for the experimental nuclear physics survey progressed, with data analysis underway.

NuPECC supported several conferences, issued a new call for 2024 events, and continued to engage with European nuclear facilities and EU projects. Meetings were held in Debrecen (May) and Bratislava (scheduled for November). These efforts underscore NuPECC's commitment to advancing nuclear science and its applications for societal benefit. **Find out more:** www.nupecc.org

Management of Co-funded Research Programmes

One of ESF's recent developments has been to develop its capacity to fully manage and operate competitive research programmes funded by external sources. This includes framing calls for proposals and organising the competitive call, assessment of the proposals, as well as the post-award phases, such as signing the grant agreements on behalf of the funders, processing payments and monitoring projects and their outcomes.

ESF is currently managing the Fight Kids Cancer programme, in partnership with and on behalf of its five funding organisations: Imagine for Margo (France), Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner (Luxembourg), KickCancer (Belgium), CRIS (Spain/UK) and KIKA (the Netherlands). Fight Kids Cancer is a collaborative research programme supporting academic research for paediatric cancers, providing 10M€ funding per year.

2023 Highlights

In 2023, ESF managed 21 projects that are ongoing within the programme. The grant agreements of 9 more projects selected from the programme's 4th call were processed, for a launch in January 2024. Following the success of the program, we managed the 4th call for projects, which opened in September 2023. This call was the first thematic one, dedicated solely to brain tumours. This resulted in the submission of 38 expressions of Interest in November 2023.

By implementing and managing research programmes for funding organisations, ESF provides a neutral one-stop-shop for organisations willing to join forces around a common and streamlined research funding effort.

Strengthening EU-funded projects

Addressing complex societal challenges through European framework projects is one of ESF's key lines of action. ESF contributes with its expertise in multiple fields, from social science projects related to inclusivity and gender equality, ethics, open science - to materials, scientific infrastructure services, NGI, and spatial sciences. Our activities span from coordinating and managing projects, to communication, dissemination, and community outreach, and ad hoc expertise support.

From proposal preparation to project reporting, in 2023 ESF was involved in 20+ EC-funded projects within the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe programmes, as a coordinator, communication lead or task lead.

In 2023,

- 11 new projects were launched
- 22 projects were ongoing

New projects starting in 2023



ASTRAIOS: Analysis of Skills, Training, Research, And Innovation Opportunities in Space

January 2023 – December 2025

The ASTRAIOS project maps space education across the EU-27 to align curricula with industry needs. It examines educational offerings, costs, and socio-economic factors. The project also analyses future trends, identifying skills needed for innovation and competitiveness in the space sector. Outputs include actionable recommendations, promotional materials for space careers, and educational resources for Copernicus and Galileo. These efforts aim to strengthen alignment between European space education and industry demands.

ESF is the project coordinator and leads the project management work package. Leading the work package focused on future trends and challenges of the European space sector and taking advantage of its extensive network amongst space agencies and space scientists, ESF helps bring agencies and scientific communities' insights into the project. Finally, as a boundary and independent organisation, ESF leads the consortium efforts on producing the project final recommendations.

Find out more: www.astraios.eu/



MULTIMINER: Multi-source and Multi-scale Earth observation and Novel Machine Learning Methods for Mineral Exploration and Mine Site Monitoring

January 2023 - June 2026

The MultiMiner project advances Earth observation and machine learning techniques for mineral exploration and mine site monitoring. It integrates diverse data sources, including Copernicus, commercial satellites, and in situ data, to support mining life cycles with minimal ground truthing. Focusing on critical raw materials, it enhances EU autonomy in raw material supply while reducing environmental impact. Demonstrated at four EU sites, the project involves 12 partners from six countries, representing diverse geological and mining contexts.

ESF leads the work package on Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation, ensuring timely, effective, and informative communication of the project results. ESF also facilitates exchanges and dialogue with the project stakeholders through local exhibition and project workshop, enhancing the overall impact of the project, increasing public awareness and exploring possibilities for the exploitation of the project outputs with the wider European mining industry and other end-users.

Find out more: www.multiminer.eu/



NGI Sargasso: Unique collaborative ecosystem and programme for promoting the transatlantic cooperation in NGI technologies

January 2023 – December 2025

Many initiatives since 2016 have focused on enhancing collaboration and cooperation in the development of Next Generation Internet (NGI) technologies, services, and standards with the US and/or Canada. With the advancement of emerging topics for the EU NGI and corresponding US and Canadian programmes such as trust and data sovereignty, digital identity, internet architecture renovation, decentralised technologies and standards, it is of outmost importance to shape the future Internet.

In this context, NGI Sargasso's mission is to catalyse transatlantic collaboration on the development and experimentation of new ideas, implementation of prototypes, and contribution to standards and open-source communities on technology trends with the potential to reshape tomorrow's NGI technologies and services. The project will run five open calls for proposals, attracting +300 EU + US and/or Canada teams working on emerging topics for the Next Generation Internet, and will support up to 96 projects that will be benefited from both equity-free funding and capacity building services in a 9-month programme.

ESF is the coordinator of the project and leads the management work package as well as the preparatory activities, where its main mission will be to organise community consultation of the organisation of several workshops. ESF is also to take care of cascade fundings through a dedicated platform, distributing ~5M euros to ~100 projects, and will also be responsible for issues related to Data Management.

Find out more: www.ngisargasso.eu/

OPEN ACCESS PROJECTS

CRAFT-OA: Creating a Robust Accessible Federated Technology for Open Access

January 2023 - December 2025

The CRAFT-OA project aims to strengthen the Diamond Open Access (OA) publishing landscape by improving its technical and organisational infrastructure. Over 36 months, it will enhance journal platforms, build communities of practice, increase visibility for Diamond OA, and integrate it with European data infrastructures like EOSC. The 23 partners from 14 European countries focus on sustainable development, delivering tools, training, and services to support institutional publishing in science and society.

ESF, through cOAlition S, ensures coordination between CRAFT-OA, DIAMAS, and the Diamond Action Plan community. ESF contributes to project leadership (WP1), technical coordination and community support frameworks (WP2), and technology exploitation and sustainability (WP7). This involvement strengthens collaboration and aligns efforts to develop and sustain the Diamond Open Access publishing ecosystem.

Find out more: www.craft-oa.eu/

DIAMAS: Developing Institutional Open Access Publishing Models to Advance Scholarly Communication

September 2022 - August 2025

The DIAMAS project addresses challenges in institutional Open Access publishing by mapping providers in 25 European countries and developing a European Quality Standard for Institutional Publishing. It will professionalise and align institutional publishing, creating a registry, training resources, and financial models. DIAMAS also promotes inclusion, multilingualism, and financial sustainability. Over three years, it aims to establish a high-quality, sustainable Open Access ecosystem in the European Research Area, co-created with diverse stakeholders.

Through cOAlition S, ESF leads and coordinates the DIAMAS project as part of its management work package. cOAlition S ensures smooth project implementation and oversees reporting progress to the Diamond Action Plan community, in collaboration with Science Europe. This role involves aligning project activities with broader Open Access goals and maintaining engagement with stakeholders to foster an inclusive and sustainable institutional publishing ecosystem in the European Research Area.

Find out more: www.diamasproject.eu/

PALOMERA: Policy Alignment of Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area

January 2023 - December 2024

PALOMERA addresses the lack of focus on open access for academic books in open science policies. It investigates barriers to open access across disciplines, languages, and geographies in the European Research Area. Using studies, surveys, and interviews, it will provide evidence-based recommendations for funders and institutions to align policies. PALOMERA aims to accelerate open access for books, promoting open science across disciplines by engaging stakeholders in inclusive co-creation and validation processes.

ESF contributes to PALOMERA through cOAlition S, engaging its Experts community to address jurisdiction-specific challenges and refine recommendations. cOAlition S participates in project coordination (WP1), developing actionable recommendations and resources (WP4), and leading communication, dissemination, and stakeholder engagement activities (WP5). Through these roles, ESF supports aligning open access policies and advancing open science practices across the European Research Area.

Find out more: www.operas-eu.org/projects/palomera/

INCLUSIVE SCIENCE



ENFIELD: European Lighthouse to Manifest Trustworthy and Green AI

September 2023 - August 2026

ENFIELD is set to establish a distinctive European Center of Excellence focused on advancing fundamental research in Adaptive, Green, Human-Centric, and Trustworthy AI. The initiative seeks to elevate research within key sectors like healthcare, energy, manufacturing, and space by attracting top talents, technologies, and resources from leading research and industry entities in Europe. By conducting high-level research aligned with industry challenges, ENFIELD aims to strengthen the EU's competitive position in AI, generating significant socio-economic impact for European citizens and businesses.

ENFIELD intends to deliver impactful outcomes, including over 75 unique AI solutions (algorithms, methods, simulations, services, datasets, and prototypes), 180 scientifically influential publications, and 200 peer-reviewed presentations. Additionally, four strategic documents, namely the Common Research Roadmap and Vision, the dynamic Safety and Security Risk Assessment Framework, the White Paper, and the Gender and Ethics Framework, will be produced.

ESF leads the implementation of an analytical framework to monitor the ethics and gender dimensions throughout the project.

Find out more: www.enfield-project.eu/



MOBI-TWIN: TWIN TRANSITION AND CHANGING PATTERNS OF SPATIAL MOBILITY: A REGIONAL APPROACH

June 2023 – May 2026

MOBI-TWIN is a project funded under the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme, uniting 9 partners from 8 different European countries. MOBI-TWIN aims to understand the evolving factors influencing spatial mobility within the context of significant global transitions, focusing on the green and digital transition, referred to as the Twin Transition. The project explores how these global transformations influence the attractiveness of different regions, consequently affecting people's mobility choices.

ESF's role is to: align MOBI-TWIN's scope and aims with the values, needs and expectations of society using RRI principles; develop scenario for assessing the effects of changing spatial mobility patterns on EU regions; develop regional and cross-regional multi-stakeholder dialogues to discuss the results of the MOBI-TWIN model.

Find out more: <https://mobi-twin-project.eu/>



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement no. 101094402.



RESIST: Regions for climate change resilience through Innovation, Science and Technology

January 2023 – December 2027

RESIST will contribute to the EU agenda on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). It will strengthen the resilience and accelerate the transformation and increase adaptive capacity of 12 climate-vulnerable EU regions, implementing 4 large-scale demonstrators of resilient innovations for with quintuple-helix partnerships (including 1 in a less developed region) and promote transfer of know-how and innovative solutions to 8 twin regions (of which 4 less developed regions) through both physical mutual-learning activities and innovative immersive digital twins.

The consortium will engage EU associations, CCA research groups, scientific experts, social engagement and communication institutions, innovation agencies and one Venture Capital Fund to co-create and validate innovative solutions, raise awareness, leverage citizens participation, and promote sustainable exploitation of results towards the markets.

To ensure effective management of this complex and large project, the leadership of the project management has been divided among three partners, with ESF responsible for issues related to Data management, Gender, and Ethics.

ESF role is both to implement an analytical framework to monitor the ethics and gender dimensions throughout the project, and at the same time to guide and support the partners in the three key fields crosscutting all activities in the project. The expertise of ESF allows RESIST to align its scope, aims, and activities with sound ethical standards and with the principles of diversity and inclusion.

Find out more: www.resist-project.eu/



PATTERN: Piloting open and responsible Activities and Trainings Towards the Enhancement of Researchers Networks

January 2023 - June 2026

PATTERN's general aim is to promote the practice of Open and Responsible Research and Innovation (Open RRI) by developing and piloting training activities for researchers at all stages of their careers.

These activities will strengthen their transferable skills, empowering Higher Education Institutions and research organisations to embrace a transformative process. This process will improve the excellence of the science conducted, the capacity within the European Research Area (ERA) to tackle societal challenges and the interaction between science and society.

ESF is a thematic leader for gender, non-discrimination and inclusion in research training. ESF also leads a work package related to Policy recommendations to authorities and institutions responsible for researchers' training. This will include:

- Mapping and analysis of initiatives and policies in Open Science and Open Responsible Research and Innovation
- Designing policy recommendations for authorities and institutions related to research training
- Developing participatory methods, such as Open Studios

Find out more: www.pattern-openresearch.eu/



SUPPORTER: SecUring sPORTs Education thRough innovative and inclusive Gender Equality Plans

April 2023 - September 2025

SUPPORTER project seeks to advance inclusive gender equality in eight partner sports higher-education institutions from Central and Eastern Europe. With tailored training and mentoring mechanisms provided by expert partners, these eight organisations will design intersectional, innovative, inclusive, and impactful Gender Equality Plans (4I-GEPs), adapted to their context, and explicitly addressing gender-based violence - including sexual harassment.

ESF is coordinating this project and leading the communication and dissemination activities. In 2023, ESF organised the project's kick-off meeting, as well as a mutual learning and training

workshop at ESF's premises. The website and communication toolkit was produced to support partners in promoting the project.

Find out more: www.supporter-project.eu

Highlights from ongoing projects

SPACE CLUSTER



February 2020 – July 2024

ESF's Role: ESF is responsible for call evaluations in the project and supports the coordinator

Europlanet 2024 Research Infrastructure (RI) provides the pan-EU infrastructure needed to address the major scientific and technological challenges facing modern planetary science and strengthen Europe's position at the forefront of space exploration, involving 53 beneficiaries from both industry and academic sectors.

ESF organised the final call for proposals for the Transnational Access programme and organised the evaluation of the proposals. The results were published in February 2023, with 74 projects approved for funding.

ESF contributed to the organisation of the Europlanet RI Meeting in Bratislava (June 2023), gathering a range of planetary science and Europlanet community workshops: an opportunity for the Europlanet Society to reflect on its situation, its current challenges and to propose a roadmap for the future. At this event, ESF organised the Europlanet Society's activities and facilitated discussions.

Find out more: www.europlanet.org/europlanet-2024-ri/

INCLUSIVE SCIENCE CLUSTER



April 2021 – September 2023

ESF's Role: Project coordinator & communication work package lead

RESISTIRÉ aims to reduce gendered inequalities caused by policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Partners and a network of national researchers collect, analyse, and translate extensive data into a new research agenda, advocacy, policy recommendations, and innovative pilot actions to foster a fairer recovery.

Ending its second research cycle, RESISTIRÉ released a report on quantitative and qualitative indicators on inequalities. These resulted into a research agenda promoted through a set of webinars involving civil society organisations and a set of *13 factsheets* promoting recommendations to policymakers. Alongside project coordination and communication lead, ESF team coordinated an open call for 8 pilot projects to demonstrate the effectiveness of the research actions.

On 20 and 21 June, RESISTIRÉ organised its Final Conference **“Towards Inclusive Crisis Responses”** to share the project results and reflect on the recommendations developed during 30 months of research activities. The conference, held in Brussels and streamed on Zoom, gathered international experts, policymakers, activists, and representatives of NGOs, pilot projects and sister projects.

Find out more: www.resistire-project.eu/



UniSAFE - Gender-based violence and institutional responses: Building a knowledge base and operational tools to make universities and research organisations safe

February 2021- January 2024

ESF’s Role: Project coordinator & communication work package lead

UniSAFE aims to produce in-depth knowledge on gender-based violence and sexual harassment in research organisations and higher education institutions, and to translate this research into operational tools for higher education and research organisations.

ESF was the coordinator of this major project supporting higher education institutions and research organisations in ending gender-based violence and has led the communication and dissemination work package. In 2023, the project entered its last phase, focusing its efforts on promoting the new insights generated on gender-based violence in academia and research, but also in further developing its operational recommendations and [tools for higher education and research institutions](#), and advocating for their uptake. This led to the organisation by ESF of the project’s final event, on 21-22 November in Namur. Titled “From policy to practice: Pathways to end gender-based violence in academia and research”, it gathered gender equality practitioners, decision-makers and policymakers at national, European and international levels. ESF specifically took the lead on organising a panel gathering representatives UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, and oversaw the overall organisation of this successful event.

Discover the toolkit at www.unisafe-toolkit.eu



OTTER - Outdoor Science Education for a Sustainable Future

September 2021 – February 2024

ESF Role: Task lead for developing accreditation guidelines, and ensuring knowledge dissemination and exploitation.

OTTER aims to enhance the understanding of Education Outside the Classroom (EOC) methods and pedagogies to acquire transferable skills and scientific knowledge, mainly in the field of environmental sustainability, and to increase scientific citizenship within Europe. OTTER's long-term goal is to provide a quality insurance framework and practical recommendations for assessment methods in education outside the classroom leading to guidelines for accreditation of non-formal education in Europe.

As the project entered its last phase, ESF was involved in developing guidelines for the assessment and accreditation of EOC practices in Europe. ESF also took the lead on engaging all partners to disseminate the project's outputs and ensure their exploitation and participated in the organisation of OTTER's final conference in Brussels.

Find out more: www.otter-project.eu



Time4CS: Time for Citizen Science

January 2021 – December 2023

ESF's Role: Work package leader for developing a “Roadmap framework leading to Institutional Changes” and facilitator partner supporting the mutual learning and evaluation programmes.

TIME4CS aims at supporting and facilitating the implementation of sustainable Institutional Changes in Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) to promote Public Engagement (citizens and citizens associations) and Citizen Science in science and technology.

The task led by ESF involves creating a statement directed at research funding organisations, as well as higher education and research institutions, encouraging them to integrate public engagement into their activities through a validated approach. This initiative draws on the experience gained during the development and implementation of institutional roadmaps, strategies, and mechanisms designed to better and more sustainably embed Citizen Science into educational and research practices, as well as funding schemes. The goal is to foster mid-term and long-term visible institutional changes that support RRI-oriented impacts. The project builds significantly on the expertise developed through the previously completed GRACE-RRI project.

In 2023, ESF mainly participated in monitoring the implementation of partner organisations' roadmaps towards institutional change, and namely their activities focusing on responsible research and innovation (RRI). ESF provided its expertise in evaluating these partners' institutional change process by participating in mentoring visits and through data collection and monitoring, focusing on sustainability and on the impact of the roadmaps, in close collaboration with the Evaluation work package.

Find out more: www.time4cs.eu



WBC-RRI.NET: Responsible Research and Innovation in the Western Balkans

March 2021 – February 2024

ESF's role: WP leader for Evaluation, task leader on international exchanges and synergies

The overall aim of WBC-RRI.NET is to foster the application of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles at the territorial level in Western Balkan Countries (WBCs), to promote a multi-level steering R&I governance framework.

In 2023, ESF team members acted as co-chairs of two working groups implemented within the project, one on Gender & Ethics, another on Open Access & Open Science. Within these working groups, ESF participated in organising webinars and public events that engaged both local (Western Balkans) and European actors and initiatives. ESF organised 2 project level workshops: i) an evaluation workshop in July in Ohrid, North Macedonia, and II) a workshop on Impact Pathways and Sustainability in December in Vienna, Austria.

Find out more: www.wbc-rri.net

MATERIAL SCIENCES



Graphene Flagship Core3 - Bringing graphene innovation out of the lab and into commercial applications.

April 2020 – September 2023

ESF's role: in WP 18 Management, ESF participates in tasks 18.5 “Alignment and coordination of PPs and AMs”, and 18.6 “International Collaborations”.

In the framework of task 18.6 “International Collaborations”, ESF-SC has been actively involved in the organisation of an international workshop (in United Arab Emirates, held during Graphene Week 2023), while following up on workshops held in March and May 2023 (Singapore, Australia, Korea, Japan and United Arab Emirates) to coordinate and support the preparation of the events reports, and later ensured their public availability on the project website. Moreover, ESF prepared and submitted in due time the deliverable related to *International Collaborations* (D18.7).

Within the task 18.5 “Alignment and coordination of PPs and AMs”, ESF-SC has been liaising with the FLAG-ERA funding agencies and the Graphene Flagship to follow up on the application presented for the FLAG-ERA JTC2023 call, which was launched in March 2023 and for which ESF-SC has coordinated the collection of topic suggestions from Graphene Flagship scientists. During a meeting held in July 2023 between ESF-SC and FLAG-ERA representatives, it was confirmed that the dialogue around joint initiatives will continue in Horizon Europe *via* the new GrapheneEU CSA project. For the

same 18.5 task, ESF engaged in different communication activities, including issuing targeted project newsletters for Associated Members and supporting WP17 Communication and Dissemination with the preparation of news items regarding scientific achievements of Associated Members. Furthermore, ESF-SC organised a special session dedicated to the Partnering Division during Graphene Week 2023, where AMs and PPs coordinators were invited to present their research work. ESF-SC also coordinated the call for Partnering Division student travel grants to attend Graphene Week 2023.

The Core 3 project officially ended on 30th September 2023. ESF has been actively involved in the final reporting activities for the project, which included the preparation and submission of the final technical report and financial report, and contribution in the preparation of a cumulative deliverable on the progress of the Graphene Flagship initiatives in the last 10 years (2013-2023). The final project review will be held on 11-15 December 2023 in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Find out more: www.graphene-flagship.eu/

GrapheneEU CSA - Europe in the Lead

October 2023 – September 2026

ESF's role: Work package lead on “European and international alignment”

The project represents the continuation in Horizon Europe of the Graphene Flagship initiative, in which ESF-SC has been involved since its inception in 2023. During the first month of GrapheneEU CSA, ESF has been informing the Associated Members of Graphene Flagship Core3 on how alignment and association mechanism will be dealt with during Horizon Europe. General information was promoted through targeted newsletter and the revamped Graphene Flagship website.

Find out more: www.graphene-flagship.eu/materials/news/europe-in-the-lead/



PASSENGER: Pilot Action for Securing a Sustainable European Next Generation of Efficient RE-free Magnets

May 2021 – April 2025

PASSENGER is developing an innovative way to produce permanent magnets without rare-earth materials and is piloting the new magnets in one of the most crucial fields for the European green economy: the electromobility sector.

ESF's Role: leader of WP5 Dissemination, Communication, and Integration

As leader of the project work package on Dissemination, Communication, and Integration, in 2023, ESF mobilised and guided consortium partners to engage in outreach activities, resulting in a consolidated outreach activities plan for the year 2023, and a report on general public outreach (D5.4).

ESF also maintained an active online presence for PASSENGER by creating and sharing informative content across all social media platforms of the project, regularly updating the project's website with

news content, and issuing newsletters. Our team also promoted PASSENGER through a poster at the IRTC 2023 and a booth at the 13th Joint European Magnetic Symposia (JEMS 2023) in Madrid.

Find out more: www.passenger-project.eu

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE CLUSTER



AGROSERV: Research infrastructures services for a sustainable and resilient agriculture and agro-ecological transitions

September 2022 – August 2027

ESF's role: task co-leader in the development of the AgroServ catalogue model, substantive participation in on transnational access management

In 2023, as co-leader for the development of the AgroServ catalogue mode, ESF finalised a deliverable detailing the model to be used for the catalogue, [now accessible on the project portal](#). Leveraging ESF's infrastructural cataloguing knowledge gained through its involvement in CatRIS, our involvement in this work package expanded to encompass the critical aspect of interoperability with other existing catalogues, including EOSC and CatRIS. Cataloguing has emerged as a highly sought-after skill in the European research infrastructure landscape. As a result, it has been a topic of discussion in recent cooperation talks with other research infrastructure stakeholders. ESF is committed to contributing to this important dialogue and further enhancing the cataloguing capabilities within the European research community.

Within the transnational access management, ESF has participated in defining the TNA (Transnational Access) calls and contributed to the preparation of user guidelines, as a project deliverable. Involvement in this task has allowed to broaden our engagement and expertise within the research infrastructure community. In this key work package, we have been focusing on transnational access evaluations, playing a key role in shaping the principles, evaluation criteria, and scoring grid for the full proposal evaluations. Notably, these evaluations will be implemented through ESF's assessment tool, which has been adapted and customised to cater to the specific needs of transnational access evaluations.

Find out more: www.agroserv.eu/



ERIMOTE: Transition to digital/remote research infrastructure service provision: lessons learnt, needs and best practices

June 2022 – November 2024

ESF's Role: work package leader on communication and outreach

As work package leader on communication and outreach, ESF has collaborated with other work packages to produce a new newsletter issue, develop an updated communication strategy, monitor and report on stakeholder engagement, demonstrating our proficiency in cross-functional collaboration and communication strategy development.

During this year, ESF has also contributed to a report on the information platform and a concept case to contact RI user communities, and ESF organised eRImote's interim report meeting at ESF.

Find out more: www.erimote.eu/