



# Toward Joint Strategy and Harmonized Policies for Access to Research Infrastructures



**Theme 3 is developing the governance tools to make access to research infrastructures (RI) as easy and as transparent as possible.**

As a PhD student I was given a letter that contained a table with three columns and perhaps 40 rows describing the average light scattering efficiency as function of scattering angle of solar system dust. In a couple of pages the author had described how he deduced the numbers from a set of night-sky observations. The letter was hand-written and my version looked like a copy of a copy of a copy. I was probably student number four in the line of users and the recipient of the letter had defended her thesis already a couple of years earlier. Mr. "L." ended the letter wishing good progress with the work and saying, "just use it as you like". Thanks to the detailed letter from Mr. L. one could follow the steps that he made to obtain the numbers and we were prepared for hidden "4 pi" factors and other pitfalls. The "L... Scattering function"

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was fitted with model calculations, compared to laboratory measurements, and used to set up brightness models. Finally new observations came up, but until then, the data given in the letter were used and the additional information that the letter contained gave me one of the best examples on how to thoroughly describe and document research work. Mr. L. had taken his readers by the hand and guided through the steps of his work. This was probably one of the most productive experiences that I had with access to data from other institutions.

***Both cost efficiency and scientific return of RIs are enhanced by multiple-purpose use and use across disciplines, as well as by joint use with other institutions or projects.***

RIs aim to make it as easy as possible to access them in a way that they "take the user by the hand" and help making best use of their resources. On the institutional level this is

even more challenging than on a level of exchange between individual researchers. At the same time RI work and access to RIs needs to be transparent and open to the community and pushing for excellent research. The access to RIs includes the modes of access, the kinds of products offered to access, and the type of usage. Typically various modes of access and types of data are used in combination. Both cost efficiency and scientific return of RIs are enhanced by multiple-purpose use and use across disciplines, as well as by joint use with other institutions or projects. Enhanced capacities for remote access on "demand" and for remote observation campaigns enable RIs to reach a broader community. Since the ultimate success of RIs is measured by their scientific outcome all RIs have this goal in common, as well as the organizational issues related to it.

The ENVRIplus project Theme 3 has the objective to develop governance tools to facilitate common, fair, and scientific merit based virtual, remote and physical access to



environmental RIs and to the data that they provide; and to ensure that the tools are sustainable and adjustable. Project participants who contribute to the access theme come from

the different environmental subdomains and bring in experience with, for example: planning and reviewing RI planning and governance structures, cruise planning,

sharing RI sites, as well as research work across disciplines. When working on the access theme we will also establish a strong link to e-infrastructure activities in the project.

