

An integrated evaluation system for international ship-time proposals

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The EU project EUROFLEETS and its follow up EUROFLEETS2, both Research Infrastructure projects funded within the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission, created an alliance of marine research centres across Europe to enhance the coordination of the European research fleet and to promote its cost-effective usage, providing researchers across Europe with transnational access to a total of 28 European research vessels and 5 pieces of embarked equipment.

To grant ship time on board the European RVs, the projects developed a ship-time proposal evaluation system based on the best procedures of other European evaluation systems. The EUROFLEETS ship-time proposal Evaluation System was accepted by all participating operators of the 28 European research vessels from 17 European nations, being the first fully European evaluation system granting ship-time on nationally owned research vessels. It was tested in the evaluation of 104 proposals and proven successful, as this system ensures that only excellent proposals are granted ship time.

This evaluation system will now be used in the project ARICE, a H2020 project aiming at providing Europe with better capacities for marine-based research in the ice-covered Arctic Ocean. In the frame of ARICE, transnational access will be granted to a set of 6 international Research Icebreakers in the high Arctic.

The integrated evaluation system developed under the umbrella of EUROFLEETS has proved to be efficient and its criteria could be used for future evaluation of European ship-time calls.