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Commercial Cloud and EO services usage: opening the gates to the research community Open Clouds for Research Environments (OCRE)

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Cloud and Earth Observation (EO) based services offer the European Research community a wealth of powerful tools. However, for many researchers these tools are currently out of reach. It is difficult to find and select suitable services. Establishing agreements with cloud and EO service providers and ensuring legal and technical compliance requires specialist skills and takes an inordinate amount of time. Equally, service providers find it difficult to reach and meet the needs of the research community in technical, financial and legal areas.

The Open Clouds for Research Environments consortium (OCRE) will change this, by putting in place an easy adoption route. In the autumn of 2019, OCRE will run a pan-European tender and establish framework agreements with service providers who meet the requirements of the research community. 10.000 European research and education institutes will be able to directly consume these offerings via the European Open Science Cloud service catalogue, through ready-to-use agreements. They will not have to run a tender of their own. In addition, to stimulate usage, OCRE will make available 9.5 million euro in service credits (vouchers), through adoption funds from the European Commission.

The OCRE consortium consists of GÉANT (consortium coordinator), CERN, RHEA and Trust-IT with the contribution of SixSq, as technology provider, together with EARSC and Evenflow, as support to outreach activities, and receives funding from the European Commission, as part of the European Open Science Cloud.

This presentation will introduce the benefits of the Open Clouds for Research Environment for providers and for researchers. It will also address how OCRE aggregates community demand and requirements and applies these into a pan-European call-for-competition, for commercial service providers to respond to. This tender which will be launched in Q3 of 2019, will result in procurement-compliant framework agreements with suitable suppliers. In the presentation OCRE will talk about how providers can respond to this opportunity.
In addition the presentation will touch upon how researchers, affiliated/not affiliated to institutions will be able to consume the services through ready-to-use contracts, without the need to run their own tender and how OCRE will stimulate usage through an adoption fund.