Storage Research Infrastructure Eco-System

D2.3 – "Access Policy: Agreement between coordinator, infrastructure owner and user"

Work Package 2 - Transnational and Virtual Access to word-class Research Infrastructures

Task 2.1 - Transnational Access Management

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ES	Energy Storage
RI	Research Infrastructure
SP	Selection Panel
TNA	Transnational Access
WP	Work Package
StoRIES	The StoRIES project

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this document is to set out the Access Policy governing Access by researchers, engineers and students to the Research Infrastructure(s) in StoRIES. This Access Policy provides procedures for the Access Providers, Applicants, StoRIES Project Participants and Users, including the minimum requirements regarding Healthy, Safety and Environmental issues (HSE) and documentation of test Research Infrastructure(s).

The basic principles and objectives of the transnational and virtual access are given in the Grant Agreement of StoRIES as well as the European Commission's 'Annotated Model Grant Agreement' AGA. The detailed procedures for implementation are set out in this Access Policy. This policy has been inspired and based on the ECCSEL ERIC Access Policy.

1 DEFINITIONS

Access means access to and use of a Research Infrastructure or Research under StoRIES guidance.

Access Agreement means the agreement as stated in Article 8.1 of the Access Policy.

Access Policy means this Access Policy (D2.3).

Access Provider means an entity that is a project beneficiary or one of their linked third parties and is giving access to one of its Facilities.

Access Summary Report means the project summary and Research Infrastructure evaluation report of the Access that has to be completed by the User(s) at the end of the Access.

Application means an application (proposal) for Access.

Access Procedure(s) means the Access procedures as described in Article 4.3 of the Access Policy (D2.3).

Applicant(s) means a (team of) researcher(s), scientist(s) and student(s) that file(s) the Application or who are named in the application.

Application Form means the form by which the Application has to be filed (included in Annex).

StoRIES Website means StoRIES official website Home | StoRIES (storiesproject.eu).

General Assembly means the General Assembly of StoRIES.

HSE means health, safety and environment.

Local Contact Person means a scientist that is assigned by the relevant Access Provider as the local contact for the Users.

StoRIES member means a project beneficiary or linked third parties of StoRIES according to the latest version of StoRIES Grant Agreement.

Selection Panel means experts nominated by the Project Management to evaluate an Application.

Peer Review Committee means the management of StoRIES TNA consisting of Work Package 2 leader and representatives of Working Group 2 and 3

Peer Review Procedure means the general Access Procedure named Peer Review Procedure as described in Article 4.3 of the Access Policy.

Project Management means StoRIES Project Management including the WP2 leader.

Research means basic or applied research in the field of ES. For the purpose of this Access Policy, education and training in the field of ES also means Research.

Research Infrastructure(s) means a facility/laboratory (or part of), a resource (or a coherent set of them), together with the related services and equipment, which have been identified as belonging to the StoRIES Research Infrastructure (RI) list. The Facilities are designed to conduct Research (exclusively or not).

StoRIES refers to the StoRIES project and for obligations the responsible party is Coordinator together and any involved Beneficiaries (i.e., work-package leaders and task leaders) for the responsibilities as described in the EU Grant Agreement. Basis for this is the EU Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement which states in article 6.1: "The Coordinator is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between the Parties and the Funding Authority. The Coordinator shall, in addition to its responsibilities as a Party, perform the tasks assigned to it as described in the Grant Agreement and this Consortium Agreement."

User(s) means Applicant(s) (i.e., researchers, scientists, engineers, and students) who have been granted Access to a RI. This definition encompasses the Applicant(s) (researchers, scientists, engineers, and students) who will physically access the RI as well as those who will not.

User group means a team of one or more researchers and/or engineers given access to the infrastructure under the project. Each user group is led by a user group leader. Members of a user group can come from one institute or from different institutes across the EU (or its Associated Countries). The reason for the participation of each member of the group must be precisely defined in the application procedure. StoRIES may neglect the participation of group members if they participation is not necessary for a successful finalization of the User/user group project at StoRIES Research Infrastructure.

WP2 means the participants of StoRIES WP2 - Transnational and Virtual Access to world-class Research Infrastructures.

2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 Open access

The Access Policy is based on the principle of 'open access'. In this respect, Access is open to all interested researchers, scientists and students based on competition and evaluation of Applications against the criteria listed in Article 4.2.

Access providers set a maximum quantity of Access to their RI to perform Research according to the annual availability they have agreed with StoRIES. StoRIES will follow one general procedure called Peer Review Procedure.

2.2 Fair, transparent, and efficient Access Procedures

The Access Procedures are based on fair and transparent rules. The Peer Review Committee (the management of StoRIES TNA consisting of Work Package 2 leader and representatives of Working Group 2 and 3) and Selection Panel will deal with the Applications as efficiently as possible.

2.3 Confidentiality of Applications

The Peer Review Committee and Selection Panel shall to the extent legally and reasonably possible respect the confidentiality of any information in the Application that has been indicated by the Applicant(s) or the Access Provider as confidential. If reasonably required, additional confidentiality agreement(s) could be concluded in this respect.

A list of applications for which Access is granted through the Project will be published on the StoRIES website.

2.4 Conflict of Interests

The Peer Review Committee will assess applications for potential conflict(s) of interest, and appropriate measures will be adopted to mitigate or eliminate such conflicts.

3   FACILITIES

3.1   Information provided by the Access Providers

The Access Provider provides to StoRIES sufficient accurate and updated information of their RI(s). This includes at minimum:

- an adequately detailed description of the RI including capacity, location, services provided, technical details and capability

- ownership (structure)

- availability and scheduled downtime

- known Access restrictions for (a part of) the RI(s) such as contractual obligations, scheduled shutdowns, ethical requirements, etc.;

- requirements concerning any possibly necessary additional (insurance) licenses or permits that would be mandatory for the User to perform an Access or any contractual document(s) that need to be agreed prior to the Access (for example confidentiality agreement)

- (indicative) Access cost(s) as in StoRIES project application

- details of the Local Contact Person(s)

- the information as stated in Article 7.2 (upon completion of the Access).

The Access Provider is responsible for providing updates of these data/documents to StoRIES in case of change.

3.2   Compliance with rules, regulations, and standards of the Research Infrastructure(s)

The Access Provider will ensure with respect to the RI(s):

- compliance with all legally applicable European, national and/or local rules, regulations and standards, for example related to HSE and permits

- appropriate systems are in place for the verification of such compliance.

4 APPLICATIONS

4.1 Information

The Application form for Access (see Annex 1) should be fully completed by the Applicant(s) and includes, at least, the following information:

- a detailed description of the proposed Research and any other funding for (part of) the project;
- the potential Users(s) (researchers, scientists and/or students) for which the Access is required, including their nationalities, positions, organisations, employers, experience and any other relevant information
- an estimation of the required time for the Research
- timeframe of the intended research
- the RI to which Access is requested
- required assistance and services (like sample storage conditions) related to the Access
- full details of any necessary materials including description of samples and material and substances brought to the RI visited
- agreement to comply with all applicable legal obligations, e.g., HSE, travel and visas, and local rules
- proof of any required insurance
- requirements regarding confidentiality, intellectual property, access rights and dissemination of the results
- potential risk(s) related to the Access.

Applicant(s) may be requested to provide additional information as required by the Access Provider to evaluate the Application.

StoRIES shall provide model Application Forms for Access to Facilities outlining all required details.

4.2 Criteria

Applications will be primarily evaluated in accordance with the Commissions principles "scientific quality, relevance, and uniqueness" and prioritised based on their scientific and technological excellence and their appropriateness towards the objectives of StoRIES and the concerned RI(s). Main factors of the Application to be evaluated include the:

- alignment of the Application (including the Research objectives) with the objectives of StoRIES and the related TNA call (including any prioritised research objectives);
- significance, innovation and potential results
- the projects funding limitations for the Access
- required time for the Research
- match between the respective RI(s) and the content of the Application
- extent to which the conceptual experimental framework, design, methods, and/or analyses are adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the Application
- the capabilities, track record and experience of the Applicant(s)
- requirement for scientific and technical support

- efficient use of the RI and resources

- the previous use by the Applicant(s) of any RI

- any reasonable Access Provider objections to the Access.

4.3 Access Procedure

A general procedure, the Peer Review Procedure, applied in accordance with Article 2.2, will ensure that Applications:

- are ideally initially discussed with the relevant Access Provider(s) in order to verify the project feasibility, the RI availability and to complete any missing information necessary for the use of the designated RI

- are submitted, at least 8 weeks (counting from closing date of the respective call), before the desired period of Access to the StoRIES Peer Review Committee, through electronic submission of the Application Form (RI availability should be agreed beforehand because many facilities need more than 8 weeks planning and have a longer booking horizon)

- are evaluated by the Selection Panel

- are discussed with the Applicant(s) during which the Applicant(s) can be required to provide missing additional information (if necessary)

- will be accepted or rejected by the StoRIES Peer Review Committee within a reasonable term (maximum of 8 weeks from completed application / TNA call closure) based on the recommendations of the Peer Review Committee and in agreement with the Access Provider. A decision of rejection due to a veto of the Access Provider shall be taken on reasonable grounds.

The evaluation and decision will typically take 4 weeks after the TNA call closure. Under special circumstances this period may be extended to 8 weeks. During the first 4 weeks, StoRIES will receive, review, rate and compare any Applications.

In case the Application has been accepted:

- an invitation for Access, together with detailed instructions and documents, will be communicated by StoRIES to the Applicant(s) within 1 week after the peer review has concluded

- the Access Agreement will be signed (prior to the Access)

- the Access Summary Report form will be given to the User(s) by the Project Management or the Access Provider. The report contains sections related to the Access schedule, the main results and observations that were achieved, the declaration of any incidents/delay and the User(s) satisfaction level. The Access Summary Report may be different depending on the type of application and RI.

- a list of accepted applications with project title, applicant's organisation and country will be published on the StoRIES website.

In case the Application has been rejected:

- general reason(s) and feedback will be provided by StoRIES

- StoRIES will not enter further correspondence concerning this decision.

5 GENERAL ACCESS COMMITMENTS

5.1 General commitments of Access Providers

Access Providers:

- will provide guidance to User(s) to ensure that any Research related to Access and any material in the custody of the Access Provider during the Access is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the rights of the User(s) and any third parties and takes full account of any related ethical, legal, confidentiality or IPR issues

- will appoint a Local Contact Person to support the User(s) during the Access

- will provide support, for example, by provision of manual(s), sample storage, operating procedures, and/or specific training for the use of instrumentation/equipment during Access

- will inform User(s) about operational requirements and in what form any samples need to be presented

- will provide User(s) instruction on local HSE and other rules

- will make clear any equipment that can only be used by Access Provider staff and not by the User(s) and specify how it will assist the User(s) with such equipment

- have an adequate insurance policy (or similar indemnity in place relating to Access by visiting researchers and, if required, ask for proof of health assurance/assistance and liability coverage or similar from the User(s) prior to the Access

- will endeavour to provide Access in accordance with any quantity of availability dedicated to Research agreed with StoRIES and for the concerned RI(s).

5.2 General commitments for User(s)

User(s):

- will comply with all (local) applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, procedures, and requirements

- will obtain the required site entrance authorisations, including those concerning materials and equipment, customs clearance procedures and visa requirements

- are responsible for fulfilling local HSE requirements related to the Research during the Access

- are responsible for any materials, including samples or equipment brought by such User(s)

- will, if required by the Access Provider, have and be able to demonstrate adequate health assurance/assistance and liability coverage or similar is in place during the Access

- will comply with reasonable supervision and instructions of the Access Provider and/or the Local Contact Person

- complete the Access Summary Report and submit it to the Access Provider(s) and StoRIES within an agreed period

- are responsible for organising travel and housing during the access.

6 COSTS

6.1 Access costs

6.1.1 For TNA users

For the TNA users of the StoRIES project, the access must be free of charge, trans-national access to research infrastructure or installations for selected users or user-groups. This access must include the logistical, technological, and scientific support and the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure.

6.1.2 For Research Infrastucture(s) owners

The Access costs reimbursements by the project will be based on actual costs or unit costs calculation as indicated in the Grant Agreement.

6.2 Material costs

User(s) shall bear all costs related to materials and their transport including samples, and equipment belonging to such User(s) and their insurance.

7 COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

7.1 Information for potential Applicant(s)

StoRIES will promote and widely publish the availability of Access by any suitable means including on the StoRIES website.

7.2 Information relating to Applications

StoRIES coordinator maintains to the extent legally possible, and in accordance with its adhesion to EU GDPR, appropriate documentation of the Applications and all Access. This documentation includes records of the names, nationalities, and home institutions of the Applicant(s), as well as the nature and quantity of Access provided to them. At any time, StoRIES coordinator and involved Members respects any legal secrecy obligations related to confidential information, including when communicating about the Applications.

A list of accepted applications with project title, applicants' organisation and country will be published on the StoRIES website.

A list of all received applications with project title, description, applicants' information including organisation and country will be submitted to the Commission as a restricted access document.

8 AGREEMENTS

8.1 Access Agreement

The Access Provider and the User(s) will agree an Access Agreement prior to and for Access to the RI(s) that, at least, contains clauses related to:

- the recognition and acceptation by the User(s) and Access Provider, of the present Access Policy without any restriction

- the extent possible subject to confidentiality the information as stated in Articles 3.1 and 3.2 of the Access Policy

- the extent possible the information as stated in Article 4.1 of the Access Policy

- the extent possible the general Access commitments as stated in Article 5.1 and 5.2 of the Access Policy

- legitimate, justified, and valid conditions that must be met for the Access to be denied or the Access Agreement to be terminated.

In particular:

- delivery date for the Access Summary Report

- any Access arrangements, conditions and requirements

- liability

- insurance

- confidentiality and non-disclosure

- delays

- intellectual property rights

- labour law

- documentation (for example the use of a Research notebook)

- use of equipment and samples

- dispute resolution

- communication

- supervision

- auditing

- force majeure.

A template of such Agreement will be provided to the Users and RI Owners by the WP2 together with the Access approval note.

ANNEX 1: APPLICATION FORM – DRAFT

STORIES trans-national access application form

TNA Call No.	
Date of submission	

Proposal resubmitted:
☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Preferred host research infrastructures	1st option:
	2nd option:
	3rd option:
Proposed starting date for the access	
Expected access duration (in days/weeks)	

USER PROJECT PROPOSAL	
User Project acronym	
User Project title	
Main scientific/technical fields (ES technologies)	
Keywords (5 max., free text)	

USER (LEADER OF THE PROPOSING GROUP)	
Name	
Phone	
E-mail address	
Nationality	

Gender	
Organization name	
Organization address	
Organization website	
Position in organization	
Activity type and legal status of organization[1]	

USER (MEMBER OF THE PROPOSING GROUP) (repeat for all members)	
Name	
Phone	
E-mail address	
Nationality	
Gender	
Organization name	
Organization address	
Organization website	
Position in organization	
Activity type and legal status of organization[1]	

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RESEARCH (max 1/2 page)
[Prepare a ½ page summary describing the relevance, scope and objectives of the proposed work, and the expected outcomes.]

STATE-OF-THE-ART (max 1 ½ page)
[Describe in brief (about 1½ page) the current knowledge on the subject, citing recent relevant references. Identify any knowledge gaps and their relevance.]   **References**

[List relevant references.]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT: OBJECTIVES, HYBRIDIZATION; EXPECTED OUTCOMES, FUNDAMENTAL SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL VALUE (max 2 pages)

[Provide a detailed description of the objectives of the proposed activity, the way these objectives will be fulfilled through the proposed work, as well as indications on the expected outcomes and the fundamental scientific and technical value and interest of the proposal. Specify the activities to be undertaken, the type of TNA infrastructure needed, the foreseen test setup, number of tests, possible test sequence, and parameters to be measured and controlled. Describe any special requirements for equipment, standards, safety measures, etc. Evaluate how robust and realistic the proposed approach is. Point out any shortcomings, uncertainties, and risks for the fulfilment of the project objectives, as well as the means to mitigate relevant risks.]

ORIGINALITY, HYBRIDIZATION, INNOVATION AND IMPACT OF PROPOSED RESEARCH (max 1 page)

[Demonstrate the originality and innovation of the proposed work and the impact the expected results will have on current and future research or practice, public safety, European standardization, competitiveness, integration, and cohesion and on sustainable growth.]

SYNERGY WITH ONGOING RESEARCH/ ANOTHER StoRIES TNA PROPOSAL (max ½ page)

[Provide information on any concurrent research project/another TNA proposal within the same StoRIES call with the same or similar subject with the one proposed. Describe the synergy (if any) that will be sought between the existing and the proposed project. Explain the degree of alignment with the StoRIES approach, scope, and objectives (ES hybridization)]

PROPOSED HOST RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE/INSTALLATION – JUSTIFICATION (max 1 page)

[Specify the type of TNA infrastructure/installation needed for the research, which must be coherent with the preferred options indicated in the first page of this proposal; justifications should be provided on the grounds of the test set-up, testing method, equipment, experience in relevant subject, etc. Describe the potential benefits for the host research infrastructure in terms of improvement of know-how or enhancement of technologies and methods. Explain whether the proposing User Group intends to deliver to the premises of the TNA Infrastructure parts or components to be tested at the User Group's expense and responsibility, or to cover the whole or part of the construction/adaptation cost of the specimens to be tested. List chemicals and materials, you will bring to the RI to be tested or used for your project. Use of some dangerous substances may be restricted or prohibited by some facilities. List any equipment or instrument, which you will need to integrate to the RI.]

SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES TO BE CONCERNED (max ½ page)

[Specify the sustainability/environmental aspects or potential harm to persons of the planned experiments and the further development of the innovation, which will or may impact the implementation. Consider the life cycle assessment of your experiment and mention any rare material you plan to use. By any questions, please contact StoRIES management team to get support from the StoRIES services dealing with the issues.]

DISSEMINATION – EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS (max ½ page)

[In addition to the mandatory reporting for the access described in the "StoRIES TNA Procedure and Rules" document (to be found at the StoRIES webpage), indicate other means through which the results to be obtained from the proposed project will be diffused and made broadly known.]

TIME SCHEDULE (max ½ page)

[Provide an indicative time-schedule for the proposed work and a target starting date.]

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSING TEAM (as long as needed)

[Give a short description of each member (organization and persons) of the proposing team including projects, publications, technical experience and capabilities and role in the proposed project.]

HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE STORIES TNA? (optional)

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[1] Choose from:

- *Higher education institution*
- *Public research organization*
- *Private not-for-profit research organization*
- *Small or medium size private enterprise*
- *Large private enterprise*
- *Other* (please specify)

REFERENCES

ECCSEL ERIC Access Policy V.2018.4. Date of approbation by the General Assembly of ECCSEL ERIC: 2018-05-30 (available at eccsel.org)