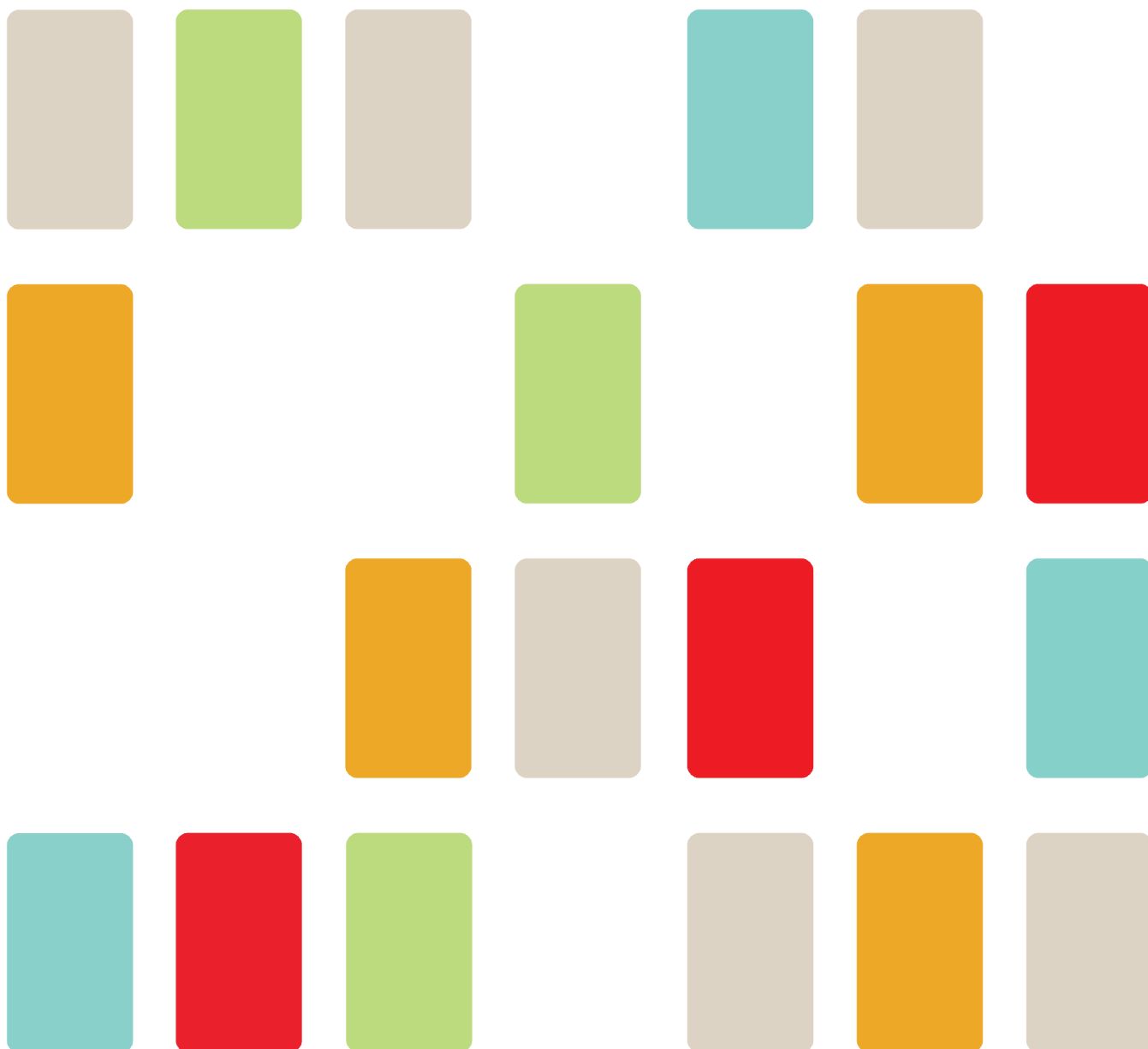




E-RIHS ERIC Annual Report 2025

WWW.E-RIHS.EU | CO@E-RIHS.EU

E-RIHS ERIC ANNUAL REPORT 2025

REPORTING PERIOD: 28 MARCH – 31 DECEMBER 2025

Approved by the E-RIHS ERIC General Assembly on 15 June 2026

Reference: Pursuant to Articles 19(5) and 26 of the E-RIHS ERIC Statutes

Document ID: E-RIHS_ERIC_Annual_Report_2025

Version: 22 April 2026, version 1.5. Prepared by the Director General (Vania Virgili) with the contribution of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee of National Nodes (Polonca Ropret and Emilio Cano) and the Central Hub staff (Brenda Doherty). Reviewed by the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board, which issued a positive advisory opinion on 7 May 2026.



ERIC established by the European Commission
Implementing Decision 2025/2239

FOREWORD

This document is the first Annual Report of the *European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science European Research Infrastructure Consortium* (E-RIHS ERIC). It covers the period from 28 March 2025, the date on which the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/709 established the Consortium, to 31 December 2025.

This Annual Activity Report is issued pursuant to Article 26 of the E-RIHS ERIC Statutes, which requires E-RIHS ERIC to produce an annual activity report covering the scientific, operational and financial aspects of its activities, to have it approved by the General Assembly and to transmit it to the European Commission and relevant public authorities within six months from the end of the corresponding financial year, making it publicly available. Under Article 19(5) of the Statutes, the Director General is responsible for submitting the report to the General Assembly; the report is drafted considering the activities of the Committee of National Nodes (Article 20(3)(h)) and of the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (Articles 7(1) and 21(3)), which provides its own annual evaluation to the General Assembly.

This report is limited to activities and decisions that took place within the reporting period (28 March – 31 December 2025). Where decisions were taken, or processes launched, during the reporting period but whose outcomes fall in 2026, the report records the action taken in 2025 only and signals the planned continuation in Section 5 Operation and Outlook.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1. E-RIHS ERIC AT A GLANCE	5
1.1 ESTABLISHMENT AND FOUNDING MEMBERS	5
1.2 ADMISSION OF ICCROM AS A PERMANENT OBSERVER	5
1.3 MISSION, VISION AND TASKS	5
1.4 STATUTORY SEAT AND CENTRAL HUB PREMISES	6
2. GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION	8
2.1 GENERAL ASSEMBLY	8
2.2 COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL NODES.....	8
2.3 SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICS ADVISORY BOARD	10
2.4 DIRECTOR GENERAL AND CENTRAL HUB	10
2.5 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ADOPTED DURING THE PERIOD	11
3. HERITAGE SCIENCE: RESEARCH, ACCESS AND TRAINING	12
3.1 THE E-RIHS CATALOGUE OF SERVICES	12
3.2 THE FIRST CALL FOR ACCESS	14
3.3 QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF NEW SERVICES	15
3.4 RESEARCH PROJECTS AND EU COLLABORATIONS.....	15
3.5 CONFERENCES AND OUTREACH EVENTS.....	16
3.6 HS ACADEMY – FRAMEWORK AND FIRST STEPS	18
4. E-RIHS IN THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE	19
4.1 ESFRI STATUS AND MONITORING	19
4.2 STRATEGIC POSITIONING IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH LANDSCAPE	19
4.5 ENLARGEMENT – COUNTRIES IN DIALOGUE.....	20
5. OPERATIONS AND OUTLOOK	21
5.1 HUMAN RESOURCES AND RECRUITMENT	21
5.2 PROCUREMENT.....	21
5.3 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	22
5.4 KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2026.....	22
APPENDIX — KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS.....	24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 marked the foundational year of the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science ERIC. In the nine months between the Commission Implementing Decision (28 March 2025) and the close of the first year (31 December 2025), E-RIHS transitioned from a legal act to a fully functioning Consortium.

Institutional set-up and governance. All statutory bodies operational: the General Assembly (two meetings), the Committee of National Nodes (four meetings) and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (two meetings). The Director General was appointed for a one-year term and took office in July, supported by a Central Hub staffed in-kind by the host country. ERIC was registered in Italy (fiscal codes, VAT number and bank account in place). The main set of foundational regulatory policies and procedures was adopted. ICCROM was formally admitted as Permanent Observer, strengthening the ERIC's international dimension.

Scientific offer and first access. The 1st Call for Access (30 Jun – 30 Sep 2025) was offered through the Catalogue of Services integrating all four E-RIHS access platforms – ARCHLAB, DIGILAB, FIXLAB and MOLAB – and marked two firsts: the introduction of the new DIGILAB access platform, and the option for a single application to combine services from more than one platform. The 1st Call attracted 75 applications (513 user requests) from 23 countries, 95% from the EU, with 30 selected for access. In parallel, the quality-assessment procedure expanded the Catalogue of Services from 122 to 202 services (+66%) between the 1st and 2nd Calls, driven by the full launch of DIGILAB (3→13) and expansion across ARCHLAB (7→11), FIXLAB (56→101) and MOLAB (56→77).

Community and European positioning. The E-RIHS Opening Days (Florence, 12–14 Nov 2025) made tangible the collective strength of the E-RIHS ecosystem, with each National Node giving a vivid account of the scientific depth, flagship activities and national trajectory it contributes. E-RIHS engaged at EU and national events to consolidate its position, advance collaborations and pursue enlargement, with Copenhagen's ERIC label ceremony as institutional highlight. It reinforced its contribution to SSHOC (Vice-Chair 2026), linking to EOSC via DIGILAB. It submitted the ESFRI monitoring report, supported AT accession and E-RIHS inclusion in NO, CZ, CH national roadmap, and initiated amendments to join ECHOES (Cultural Heritage Cloud) and GRAPHIA (SSH Knowledge Graph across peer RIs). The HS Academy took its first dedicated step on early-career heritage scientists, to be scaled up by CHIRON, a new EU training project. Beyond Europe, an MoU with Egypt complemented ongoing cooperation with Brazil.

Operations and resources. The Central Hub took shape as a purpose-built team, combining part-time host-country in-kind contributions with the first E-RIHS recruited staff: four of the five staff-plan positions were filled through three open vacancies. It took up its definitive seat in building B8 of the Manifattura Tabacchi complex in Florence, a restored landmark of 20th-century Italian industrial heritage. Inaugurated in November, the premises give the ERIC an institutional home shared by all National Nodes, with meeting rooms and an exhibit area open to the entire heritage-science community to showcase its scientific results. The pro-rata 2025 budget, amounting to around €800,000 in Members' contributions, was implemented through expenditures focused on the operational conditions required to make the ERIC functional from its first months. The audited 2025 financial statement will be submitted to the General Assembly in 2026.

Outlook. 2026 will be a year of consolidation, marked by the finalisation of the Scientific Strategy 2026–2030 and its Scientific Plan; the implementation of the 2nd Call for Access; the full roll-out of the HS Academy; the finalisation of the Central Hub staff-plan alongside the launch of the recruitment procedure for the Director General's five-year mandate; and the progress within the ESFRI Roadmap 2026 towards Landmark status.

These foundations, shaped by the contribution of all, carry the shared commitment to deliver excellent heritage science. With our Members, National Nodes and partners across Europe and beyond, E-RIHS will serve its wide interdisciplinary community, advancing towards continuous improvement and full operation.

Vania Virgili, E-RIHS ERIC Director General

1. E-RIHS ERIC AT A GLANCE

1.1 ESTABLISHMENT AND FOUNDING MEMBERS

The European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science was established as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (E-RIHS ERIC) by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/709 of 28 March 2025, notified under document C(2025) 1838. The Decision was published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 9 April 2025 (OJ L 2025/709) and was adopted under Council Regulation (EC) No 723/2009 on the Community legal framework for a European Research Infrastructure Consortium.

Under its Statutes (OJ C 2025/2239 of 9 April 2025), E-RIHS ERIC is a **distributed research infrastructure** comprised of E-RIHS National Nodes, has its **statutory seat in Florence, Italy**, and is established for an indefinite period.

The application to set up E-RIHS ERIC was submitted by **eleven founding countries – Cyprus, France, Hungary, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom** – with Italy designated as the host Member State.

1.2 ADMISSION OF ICCROM AS A PERMANENT OBSERVER

The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) is explicitly recognised in the Preamble and Annex I of the E-RIHS ERIC Statutes as an intergovernmental organisation that had expressed interest in Permanent Observer status. Its longstanding mandate in conservation science, training, standard-setting and documentation reinforces the international, ethical and policy dimensions of E-RIHS ERIC.

The admission was conducted pursuant to Articles 13(2) and 16(3) of the Statutes. At its first meeting on 27 May 2025, the General Assembly, taking note of ICCROM's formal confirmation letter of 23 May 2025, confirmed the intention to admit ICCROM as Permanent Observer, granted the exemption from the annual cash contribution foreseen for intergovernmental organisations, and invited the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (SEAB) to issue the required advice. The SEAB delivered its favourable opinion on 31 October 2025, and the Permanent Observer status of ICCROM was formally ratified by the General Assembly in Florence on 13 November 2025.

ICCROM now participates in the General Assembly and the Committee of National Nodes.

1.3 MISSION, VISION AND TASKS

According to Article 2 of its Statutes, E-RIHS ERIC coordinates its National Nodes and provides researchers and heritage practitioners with a single point of access to cutting-edge facilities, mobile laboratories, archives, collections, digital tools and data, together with the specialised competencies of the experts who operate them. It supports advanced research, training, provider and user mobility, promotes cross-disciplinary collaboration between the sciences and the humanities, fosters innovation, standardisation and knowledge transfer in the study and conservation of cultural heritage, identifies European projects of interest in heritage science and related funding opportunities and establish international partnerships with other European and non-European organisations in heritage science and related fields. All activities are pursued ethically and transparently on a non-economic basis.

These statutory tasks are guided by the vision and mission elaborated by the E-RIHS community and set out in the E-RIHS Business Plan 2025-2027 (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14620279>), here presented in condensed form. The **vision** of E-RIHS is to ensure that heritage remains accessible, relevant and

meaningful in a diverse and changing world, blending innovative technologies with cultural insights across disciplines and borders, so that heritage continues to drive sustainable development and enrich the lives of present and future generations. The **mission** of E-RIHS is to advance heritage science as a global leader by bringing together the expertise of a distributed community of scientists, humanists and heritage practitioners, by promoting best practices and the interoperability of tools and data, and by delivering highly specialised training through the HS Academy to empower researchers and professionals in addressing critical challenges in the understanding, preservation, management and appreciation of heritage.

1.4 STATUTORY SEAT AND CENTRAL HUB PREMISES

The Central Hub of E-RIHS ERIC, which hosts the statutory and operational seat of the consortium, is located in Florence, at Via delle Cascine 35, in building B8 of the historic ex Manifattura Tabacchi, a ~100,000 square meter rationalist complex designed by Pier Luigi Nervi and Giovanni Bartoli, in operation as a State Tobacco Factory from 1940 to 2001 and subject to cultural-heritage protection by the Italian Ministry of Culture. The complex is today undergoing an urban-regeneration process, turning the former factory into a district dedicated to contemporary culture, creativity, education and innovation. Building B8 – historically the administrative and representative building of the compound, with a sculptural bas-relief by Francesco Coccia on its facade – has been identified as the seat of E-RIHS ERIC.

Approximately 1,000 square meters on three floors of building B8 are dedicated to the ERIC, under a public-private partnership signed on 6 September 2022 between Fondazione CR Firenze (FCRF) and the Italian National Research Council (CNR). FCRF committed €10 million to acquire and refurbish the building, making the premises available free of charge for ten years to host the statutory seat of E-RIHS ERIC and the Italian National Node E-RIHS.it, through a FCRF–CNR free loan-for-use and a matching CNR–E-RIHS ERIC sub-loan-for-use.

With refurbishment completed, in the third week of October 2025, E-RIHS ERIC moved from the provisional premises used since 2023 in building B9 to the definitive headquarters in building B8. As the final sale of B8 from Manifattura Tabacchi to FCRF was still pending – subject to the waiver of cultural-heritage pre-emption rights under Italian law – a bridging arrangement was put in place: on 21 October 2025 E-RIHS ERIC signed a direct free loan-for-use with M.T. Manifattura Tabacchi S.p.A., complemented by a service contract covering facility management, security, fire safety, utilities and connectivity, and by a third-party and employer's liability insurance policy. Under this arrangement, in 2025 E-RIHS ERIC directly bore only electricity, water and cleaning costs; all other services were included. On 12 November 2025, FCRF and CNR signed an addendum to the 2022 Protocol aligning it with the new timing, under which E-RIHS ERIC is directly responsible for the management of the Central Hub premises until June 2026, when the scheme originally agreed for the management of the Central Hub (FCRF–CNR free loan-for-use and CNR–E-RIHS ERIC sub-loan-for-use) will take effect.

The transition required an exceptional logistical, procedural and legal effort. Within a remarkably short time, E-RIHS ERIC (through the Director General and external consultants engaged for specialised services) and the Italian National Node E-RIHS.it (through CNR-Institute of Heritage Science, CNR-ISPC) jointly equipped the building with furniture, audio-visual and IT systems, and set up a temporary exhibit introducing project research outcomes to its visitors. Thanks to this combined effort, the Central Hub was fully operational in time for its official opening.

The premises now host E-RIHS ERIC and selected members of E-RIHS.it personnel contributing in kind to the activities of the Central Hub, and comprise offices, meeting rooms and multi-purpose exhibition and community spaces. Beyond its coordination functions, the Central Hub is conceived as a facility of E-RIHS in its own right, open to the whole community: the exhibition areas are designed to showcase the results of

E-RIHS access and training activities as well as those of the European projects carried out by E-RIHS partners, while the meeting rooms provide a shared working space where researchers and professionals from across the distributed infrastructure can meet, develop ideas and shape them into concrete collaborative projects, and where E-RIHS ERIC can engage directly with its stakeholders – from funders and policymakers to cultural institutions and the wider heritage science community.

The new headquarters were inaugurated at the E-RIHS Opening Days (Florence, 12–14 November 2025). In the weeks that followed, the Hub had already taken on its strategic role as an open European facility: on 27 November 2025 it hosted the first co-design workshop of UNICHE (ID 101233650) — *Unified No-Code platform for Interactive Cultural Heritage Experiences*; on 3–5 December 2025 a working meeting of COLOURS (GA. 101233413) — *Collaborative On-cloud Lab for the conservation and digital restoration of ColOUred heritage collectionS*. Both are sister projects of ECHOES — the Horizon Europe project selected to build the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH). The COLOURS consortium includes institutional partners already active in E-RIHS (CNR-ISPC and CNR-Institute of Chemical Sciences and Technologies “Giulio Natta” - SCITEC Italy; ZVKDS, Slovenia) and partners from countries engaging with E-RIHS on accession (FORTH, Greece; NTNU, Norway), consolidating existing relationships while deepening dialogue with candidate countries.

Looking ahead, the Central Hub will progressively open its spaces to the whole E-RIHS community, with dedicated actions to welcome colleagues from all National Nodes, through short-term secondments, joint initiatives, and increasing availability of the premises for E-RIHS-wide meetings, workshops and training initiatives.

2. GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION

The governance of E-RIHS ERIC is articulated in four bodies: the General Assembly, its governing body; the Director General, its legal representative, assisted by the Central Hub; the Committee of National Nodes, its scientific body; and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board, its advisory body.

Between 28 March and 31 December 2025, the four bodies were constituted and made operational: the General Assembly, the Committee of National Nodes and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board held their inauguration meetings, the Director General was appointed and took office, and the Central Hub began operating both with staff provided as an in-kind contribution by CNR, as representing entity of the host country, and with the recruitment of its first dedicated staff.

2.1 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly met twice in 2025: GA1 on 27 May, for the launch of the ERIC and the approval of the 2025 budget; and GA2 on 13 November, for the approval of the 2026 budget and the 2025 provisional statement, already reflecting the cyclical rhythm that will structure the institutional life of the ERIC.

The start-up was supported by intense coordination between the interim Director General and the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MUR), which – as ministry of the host country – accompanied Founding Members in the formal designation of their representatives to the General Assembly and of their National Node Coordinators. Preparatory work began immediately after the ERIC's entry into force, enabling the full constitution of its bodies in about a month and a half.

GA1, initially scheduled for 9 May and postponed to 27 May to allow all Founding Members to complete their nominations, was the constitutive meeting of the ERIC. Prof. Lucia Toniolo (Italy) was elected Chair, Prof. David Fiala (France) Vice-Chair and Dr. Elisabetta Andreassi (in-kind contribution from CNR-ISPC) Secretary, with mandates until June 2026 to ensure continuity throughout the transition phase; Dr. Vania Virgili was appointed Director General pro tempore for the same period. At the same meeting, the foundational instruments required by the Statutes were adopted, including the Rules of Procedure of the three bodies, operating policies and the financial framework (see Section 2.5).

GA2, held in hybrid format at the Central Hub in Florence as part of the E-RIHS Opening Days, marked the transition from set-up to regular operations. The General Assembly was informed of the progress of the Central Hub, the Committee of National Nodes, the initial work on the Scientific Strategy 2026–2030 and the preliminary outcome of the first Call for Access. It also authorised the participation of E-RIHS ERIC in the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) and in the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASSH), discussed the potential establishment of an Enlargement Board as an ad hoc committee, and appointed an internal working group to prepare the selection procedure for the Director General for the five-year term established by the Statutes.

2.2 COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL NODES

In 2025 the Committee of National Nodes (CNN) held four meetings: 5 June (CNN1, online), 9 October (CNN2, online), 12 November (CNN3, hybrid, at the Central Hub in Florence during the E-RIHS Opening Days) and 28 November (CNN4, online).

CNN1 formally constituted the Committee under Article 20(2) of the Statutes and elected Dr. Polonca Ropret (Slovenia) as Chair and Dr. Emilio Cano (Spain) as Vice-Chair, for three-year and three-and-a-half-year mandates respectively. ICCROM participates as an observer. Over 2025, the CNN covered the

scientific topics that enable E-RIHS ERIC to operate at a level of excellence as a distributed research infrastructure for heritage science.

Access was the central theme of the CNN's work. Building on the Access Policy approved by the General Assembly, the CNN agreed the launch of the 1st Call for Access with the Central Hub – a pilot exercise through which experienced providers from the previous E-RIHS-related projects made available both their existing and new services, including those for the newly-established DIGILAB platform. Preliminary results were reviewed at CNN2 (75 proposals were submitted by 180 user group members, involving more than 500 individual access requests to facilities, with the strongest demand for MOLAB and FIXLAB). CNN3 then monitored the peer-review phase of the 1st Call and the quality procedure assessment for the 2nd Call for Access.

In parallel, to make the full range of access modalities foreseen by the Access Policy operational, the CNN developed the **General Rules of the Matchmaking Services** – a national-level access designed to support exploratory, small and short-term collaborations between users and providers within the same country, nationally funded and jointly labelled E-RIHS and National Node – and opened the scientific discussion on the classification of **Wide Access**, distinct from Matchmaking, as a means of integrating remote and data-driven access modalities in the E-RIHS portfolio.

A parallel strand of work concerned the **Scientific Strategy 2026–2030**. It was initiated at CNN1 through a drafting team (Chair, Vice-Chair, the National Node Coordinators for Italy and Poland, the Director General and three part-time staff unit of the Central Hub), with a mandate to identify the scientific domains, challenges and technological advancement areas in which E-RIHS ERIC can take a leadership position over the next five years, and presented as a first draft at CNN3 for the consideration of the CNN.

The **growth of the service portfolio** was at the core of CNN4. On the basis of the SEAB Recommendation Report, the CNN discussed and approved the integration of new services into the Catalogue of Services and endorsed the exploration of an Access Platform Coordinator function for each platform, in order to ensure scientific direction across the distributed infrastructure and to guarantee the complementarity of the same techniques and methods deployed across the National Nodes – so that the ERIC operates as a unique research infrastructure rather than as a juxtaposition of national components. A dedicated **Working Group on the central co-financing of MOLAB and of sampling for FIXLAB** was launched in the same context, to consolidate the principal centrally-managed access mechanisms of the ERIC.

Alongside these scientific lines, the CNN prepared the **enlargement strategy** of E-RIHS ERIC, finalising the draft Rules of Procedure of the Enlargement Board for submission to the General Assembly as an ad hoc committee supporting the structured technical dialogue with countries and organisations interested in joining the ERIC; and contributed to the positioning of the ERIC within the European research landscape – and in particular within the ESFRI framework – through the submission of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) monitoring questionnaire and the collection of national inputs from Member States.

The scientific and operational agenda of the CNN was complemented by the initial deployment of the **HS Academy**, whose first activity took place at the Opening Days on 13 November 2025 with a dedicated Young Generation workshop for the rising community of heritage scientists.

In 2025, all National Nodes committed to the start-up phase of the ERIC, supporting in parallel the setting-up of the national infrastructures, the consolidation of the access portfolio of E-RIHS ERIC. In several Member States, this commitment was sustained by **dedicated national funding schemes and competitive projects**, including – among others – H2IOSC (NextGenerationEU, 2023–2026) in Italy, the FENG ESIF programme (2025–2027) supporting the DIGILAB-aligned initiative in Poland, EquipEx+ ESPADON and ANR-funded instruments in France, the AEI ERIC-network grant and the CSIC strategic grant (2025–2027) in Spain, as well as structural national allocations in the Hungary, the Netherlands, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom.

Throughout the period, the CNN operated in continuous dialogue with the Director General and the Central Hub, ensuring that each strategic and scientific decision was shaped jointly and grounded in the realities of the National Nodes.

2.3 SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICS ADVISORY BOARD

Under Article 21 of the Statutes, the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (SEAB) is the advisory body of E-RIHS ERIC on scientific, technical and ethical matters. Its Rules of Procedure were approved by the General Assembly at its inaugural meeting, together with the decision to set the number of SEAB members at seven and the mandate to the Director General to launch the appointment process. Following the call for candidatures circulated by the Central Hub with a four-week deadline, the General Assembly appointed the first SEAB in summer 2025, for the term 2025–2028:

- Bruno Brunetti (IT) – Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at the University of Perugia, expert in material characterisation of heritage;
- Julio del Hoyo-Meléndez (PL) – Head of the Non-Destructive Conservation Laboratory at the National Museum in Krakow, preventive conservation – SEAB Chair;
- Katrien Keune (NL) – Head of Science at the Rijksmuseum and Professor of Molecular Spectroscopy at the University of Amsterdam;
- Irena Lazar (SI) – Professor of Archaeology and UNESCO Chair holder at the University of Primorska;
- Xavier Rodier (FR) – CNRS archaeologist, Head of MSH Val de Loire, digital archaeology and heritage data;
- Stefan Simon (DE) – Director of the Rathgen Research Laboratory in Berlin, sustainability and ethics in heritage – SEAB Vice-Chair;
- Iwona Szmelter (PL) – Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, conservation of modern and contemporary art.

The Chair and Vice-Chair were elected for a three-year term, renewable once, through an online ballot launched at the introductory SEAB meeting of 15 September 2025 and closed on 13 October 2025.

In 2025, the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (SEAB) met twice online – an introductory meeting on 15 September and its first operational meeting on 31 October – while its members conducted, in the weeks between, the individual peer-review on new service proposals, supported by the Central Hub.

The core scientific activity of the SEAB during the reporting period was its contribution to the E-RIHS ERIC Quality System, developed in close interaction with the Central Hub’s Quality Officer (Brenda Doherty, in-kind contribution of CNR-SCITEC) and with the Committee of National Nodes. The SEAB peer-reviewed the candidate services for inclusion in the Catalogue of Services; the detailed methodology, figures and outcomes of this exercise are presented in Section 3.3. The SEAB also issued its formal advice on the admission of ICCROM as Permanent Observer (see Section 1.2).

Throughout the reporting period, the SEAB operated in continuous dialogue with the Director General, the Central Hub and the Committee of National Nodes, ensuring that the strategic scientific and ethical dimensions were embedded into the earliest operational choices of the ERIC.

2.4 DIRECTOR GENERAL AND CENTRAL HUB

The Central Hub, under the authority of the Director General, is the operational and coordinating engine of E-RIHS ERIC.

In 2025, the General Assembly (May 2025) unanimously appointed Vania Virgili as Director General for a mandate of one year, together with the related delegation of powers covering legal representation, ordinary and management activities, the active cycle, personnel and the financial area. Leveraging this delegation

and supported by a focused set of external consultancy services – a chartered and legal accountant and a labour consultant engaged under Italian law – the Director General completed between June and July 2025 the founding administrative steps required to make E-RIHS ERIC a fully operational legal entity: the Italian Tax Code and VAT Number were obtained, the ERIC bank account was opened, and the debit notes were issued to Members to initiate the collection of the 2025 pro-rata membership contributions. The Director General formally took office in July 2025. By the second half of 2025, the Central Hub was in a position to issue contracts, process expenditure, receive funds and sign institutional agreements in its own name – a necessary pre-condition for the roll-out of E-RIHS operations.

The Central Hub team supporting the Director General in 2025 was formed, as an in-kind contribution of the host Member, by four CNR staff deployed on a part-time basis – Elisabetta Andreassi, David Buti, Marica Grano and Giovanni Pescarmona from CNR-ISPC and Brenda Doherty from CNR-SCITEC – covering Quality, Access and Catalogue of Services, Helpdesk, liaison with EU initiatives and secretariat functions for the General Assembly, the Committee of National Nodes and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board. This arrangement provided immediate operational continuity with the implementation phase of E-RIHS and ensured that the governance bodies could convene, deliberate and be recorded from the very first weeks of the ERIC's existence.

In parallel, to consolidate this nucleus into an autonomous Central Hub team, the Director General launched in the second half of 2025 the first dedicated ERIC recruitment procedures. Three vacancies were advertised during the reporting period – communication assistant, financial officer and DIGILAB senior officer – with the associated selection procedures concluded by the end of the reporting period or shortly thereafter. The rankings generated by these procedures also enabled the coverage of a further senior officer position without an additional call, bringing to four the positions filled out of the five foreseen in the 2025 staff plan. Details on framework, publication, search committees, outcomes and appointees are provided in Section 5.1.

2.5 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ADOPTED DURING THE PERIOD

In 2025, the following foundational policies and procedures were adopted:

- Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly
- Rules of Procedure of the Committee of National Nodes
- Rules of Procedure of the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board
- Annex II Financial (2025–2029)
- Access Policy
- Quality System
- Data Management Policy
- HR Policy
- Recruitment Procedures
- Rules on Procurement Procedures and Criteria
- Gender Equality Plan 2025–2027

All documents, with the exception of the Rules of Procedure, which are for internal use, are published on the E-RIHS website under the Documentation section, <https://www.e-rihs.eu/documentation/>

In parallel, dedicated workspaces have been set up on the D4Science gateway (<https://e-rihs.d4science.org>) to provide controlled-access environments for official governance documentation – including convocations, minutes, resolutions and supporting documents – as foreseen by the Statutes.

3. HERITAGE SCIENCE: RESEARCH, ACCESS AND TRAINING

3.1 THE E-RIHS CATALOGUE OF SERVICES

E-RIHS ERIC provides access to heritage-science resources through four integrated platforms – **ARCHLAB**, **DIGILAB**, **FIXLAB** and **MOLAB** – which federate the distributed scientific capacity of the National Nodes into a single-entry point: the E-RIHS Catalogue of Services (CoS, <https://catalogue.e-rihs.eu/catalogue>). Scientific delivery remained with the National Nodes; the Central Hub ensured harmonisation across Member Countries and orchestrated the 1st Call for Access.

Designed as a core building block during the E-RIHS Implementation Phase (GA 101079148, 2022–2024), the CoS was brought into full operation during the transition to the ERIC and fine-tuned up to the opening of the 1st Call for Access on 30 June 2025. Its initial population rested on the principle of continuity with the community the ERIC inherits: the so-called experienced services, already quality-vetted through predecessor projects (IPERION HS, GA 871034, 2020–2024, and earlier initiatives), were onboarded – in agreement with the Committee of National Nodes – without a renewed SEAB assessment. New services proposed by the Nodes were instead submitted to the full SEAB procedure (see Section 3.3).

The 2025 CoS also marked the first-ever inclusion of DIGILAB services. As no comparable benchmark existed in predecessor projects, the ordinary SEAB quality assessment was not applied during this initial phase – a deliberate choice to avoid penalising a community still in formation, with quality standards to be developed progressively alongside user feedback. To accompany this formative phase, a dedicated coordination working group – the DIGILAB Café – was launched in June 2025 with a core group of Nodes with consolidated national activities (e.g. ESPADON in FR, H2IOSC in IT, DIGILAB.pl and HERle in PL, HSDS in UK), moved to a monthly cadence from September, and by year-end brought together most of the E-RIHS National Nodes. In 2025 the Café addressed: the onboarding of the DIGILAB services; the alignment among national indicatives; the progressive definition of wide-access modalities; the coordination with the HS Portal (OntoPortal technology); and training and documentation materials.

In parallel with the running of the 1st Call (30 June – 30 September 2025), a sustained effort was launched to broaden the CoS through the ordinary SEAB quality-assessment procedure – a shared endeavour of the Central Hub, the Committee of National Nodes and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board, aimed at strengthening the scientific and geographical coverage of E-RIHS offer already from its second access cycle.

As a result, between the opening of the 1st Call and the opening of the 2nd Call (30 January 2026), the CoS grew from 122 to 202 services, a +66% increase (Figure 1). Growth was particularly pronounced for DIGILAB (from 3 to 13, reflecting the full launch of the platform) and FIXLAB (from 56 to 101), while ARCHLAB and MOLAB consolidated their offer. All contributing National Nodes increased or confirmed their share, and Cyprus joined as a new contributor to the Catalogue in the 2nd Call. A detailed breakdown by National Node and platform is provided in Table 1.

Figure 1 – Growth of the E-RIHS Catalogue of Services by access platform, from the opening of the 1st Call (30 June 2025) to the opening of the 2nd Call (30 January 2026).

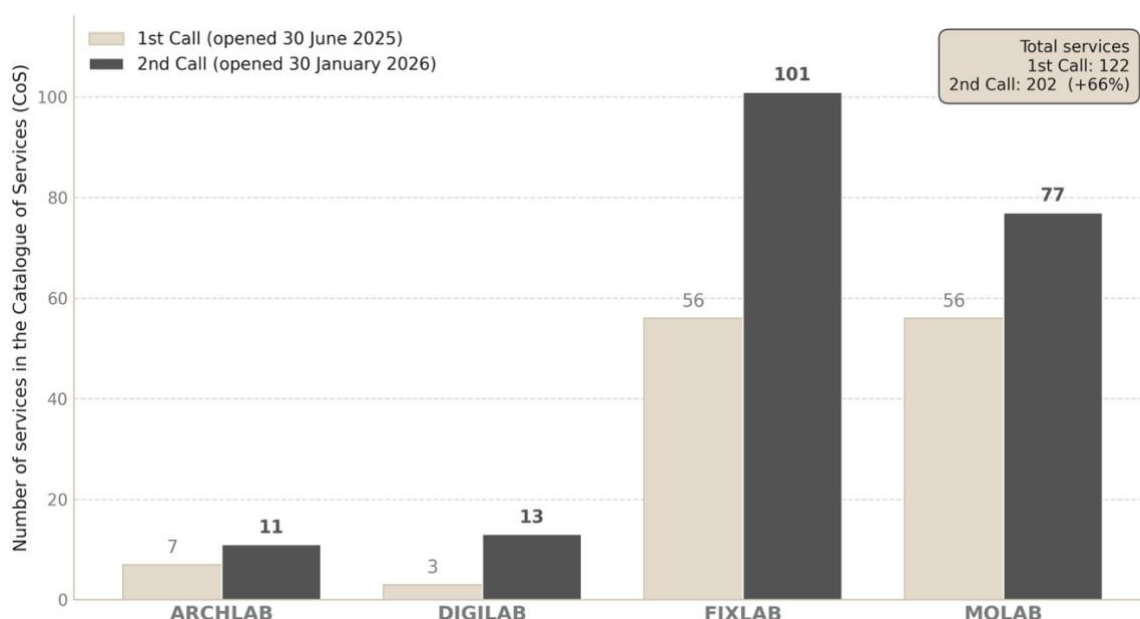


Table 1 – Services available in the E-RIHS Catalogue of Services, by National Node and access platform, at the opening of the 1st and 2nd Calls for Access.

National Node	ARCHLAB	DIGILAB	FIXLAB	MOLAB	Total
Cyprus	0 → 0	0 → 0	0 → 0	0 → 2	0 → 2
France	0 → 1	1 → 6	7 → 7	4 → 5	12 → 19
Hungary	0 → 0	0 → 1	9 → 11	0 → 0	9 → 12
Italy	1 → 1	2 → 3	2 → 2	36 → 38	41 → 44
Netherlands	1 → 2	0 → 0	4 → 5	0 → 0	5 → 7
Poland	0 → 0	0 → 1	0 → 9	2 → 14	2 → 24
Romania	1 → 1	0 → 0	0 → 0	1 → 1	2 → 2
Slovenia	1 → 1	0 → 0	9 → 18	3 → 3	13 → 22
Spain	1 → 2	0 → 0	9 → 19	2 → 2	12 → 23
UK	2 → 3	0 → 2	16 → 30	8 → 12	26 → 47
TOTALS	7 → 11	3 → 13	56 → 101	56 → 77	122 → 202

Reading: 1st Call count → 2nd Call count.

The whole 2025 effort was sustained through in-kind contributions from National Nodes to the Central Hub's coordination effort: CNR-ISPC and CNR-SCITEC (E-RIHS.it) for the day-to-day management and evolution of the CoS and direct support to service managers; CNRS-MAP (E-RIHS.fr), within the ERC nDame_Heritage project – in a convergence of scientific objectives with the prefiguration and launch of E-RIHS DIGILAB – for the coordination and animation of the DIGILAB Café and support to DIGILAB service managers.

Alongside CoS population, Central Hub and CNN worked throughout 2025 to improve structure, completeness and usability of the CoS and the wider organisation of access delivery (user helpdesk, feasibility-check procedures, evaluator matching). This continuous improvement effort also led to the

preparation of Terms of Reference for the Access Platform Coordinators – operational CNN positions dedicated to the scientific and technical coordination of each platform – whose preparatory work took shape in late 2025 and is still in discussion.

3.2 THE FIRST CALL FOR ACCESS

The E-RIHS ERIC access offer is articulated through two Calls for Access per year – a Spring Call (Q1) and an Autumn Call (Q3) – providing the heritage-science community with regular, predictable entry points to the services of the four platforms.

The 1st Call for Access (Autumn 2025) was explicitly conceived as a pilot exercise. Its purpose was twofold: to test the ERIC's procedures and the CoS dashboard end-to-end, and to gauge the user community response to a revised access model. The methodology is in continuity with the predecessor projects (e.g., IPERION HS, IPERION CH, CHARISMA and earlier initiatives); what changes is the funding logic – now underpinned by the in-kind contribution of the E-RIHS Member Countries through the services of their National Nodes, complemented by a Central Hub budget for user-related costs – and, consequently, the trans-national access obligation, which is lifted: users can apply for services regardless of country, including their own.

The first E-RIHS ERIC Call for Access was launched on 30 June 2025 and closed on 30 September 2025. For the 1st Call, three DIGILAB services were made available: ATON (Web3D services for Heritage Science), Aioli (reality-based 3D annotation platform for collaborative documentation), and SENNSE. This made the 1st Call the first in the history of E-RIHS to include DIGILAB services as a regular component of the offer, alongside the three legacy platforms. For the first time, the E-RIHS access procedures also allowed users to submit multi-platform proposals, combining services drawn from different platforms within a single application.

Applications were managed through the Central Hub Helpdesk, in cooperation with the Service Managers at partner facilities. Following the submission deadline, Service Managers carried out technical feasibility checks on each proposal. The proposals deemed feasible were evaluated by the E-RIHS Peer Review Panel, comprising approximately sixty external experts. Proposals were ranked using weighted criteria consistent with the approved E-RIHS Access Policy: scientific excellence (60%), impact (20%) and feasibility (20%), ensuring a transparent and merit-based selection process.

Despite being the first call, it attracted strong interest from the heritage-science community. The headline figures for the 1st Call for Access are summarised below:

Indicator	Value
Proposals submitted	75
Total user requests (incl. multi-facility)	513
Proposals technically feasible	65
Projects selected for access	30
Share of proposals from E-RIHS ERIC Member Countries	76%
Share of proposals originating from the EU	95%
Countries represented among applicants	23
Facilities engaged across submitted proposals	174
External peer reviewers mobilised	~60

In total, 30 projects were selected for access, broken down as follows: 16 FIXLAB, 8 MOLAB, 3 combined MOLAB/FIXLAB, 1 ARCHLAB, 1 combined ARCHLAB/FIXLAB, 1 DIGILAB. The access is to be implemented by January 2027.

The scientific scope was broad. Around 30–40% of the proposals concerned, respectively, archaeology, heritage science, chemistry, conservation science, materials science, archaeometry and art history, with about 70% of the proposals explicitly interdisciplinary – a defining feature of heritage science and a direct consequence of the multi-platform nature of the E-RIHS offer.

Throughout the process, the Helpdesk supported users during submission, facilitated communication with service managers, and coordinated the matching of proposals with suitable reviewers. The main operational challenge was precisely the reviewer-matching step: the high level of interdisciplinarity made automated matching insufficient and required significant manual coordination by the Helpdesk to ensure balanced and expert-based evaluations.

The 1st Call was also the main terrain on which the ERIC's procedures were put to the test: the E-RIHS community learned by doing, adjusting workflows and tools as the access call cycle progressed. The insights gained are directly feeding into the preparation of the 2nd Call for Access (deadline 15 April 2026) and into the continuous refinement of the access procedure.

3.3 QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF NEW SERVICES

In 2025, the E-RIHS ERIC Quality System was applied for the first time to the Catalogue of Services, through a joint effort of the Committee of National Nodes (CNN), the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (SEAB) and the Central Hub's Quality Officer (Brenda Doherty).

The work was conducted in accordance with the E-RIHS Quality System, which required the submission and review of standardized documentation, including 57 candidate facility and new service proposals of which 48 were supported by National Node appraisals. Each service proposal was assessed by two SEAB members to ensure both subject-matter expertise and impartiality, using a structured evaluation framework. The assessment criteria focused on scientific value, technical capacity, personnel expertise, and overall relevance, leading to recommendations classified as approval or pending. A consensus meeting held on 31 October 2025 enabled discussion of the evaluation results, clarification of criteria, and alignment on decision-making processes. No proposals were rejected; those classified as pending were invited to provide additional information. Following this process, 45 new services were included in the Catalogue of Services (CoS) for the 2nd Call for Access (Spring 2026).

Beyond the evaluation process of services, the SEAB contributed significantly to strengthening quality standards and strategic coherence across the CoS. The SEAB introduced clearer requirements for scientific validation, including minimum thresholds for peer-reviewed publications to demonstrate expertise and reliability. It also addressed challenges related to redundancy and overlapping services by recommending that the Committee of National Nodes (CNN) develop criteria to ensure complementarity and added value within the CoS. Through the detailed review of pending proposals, SEAB emphasized the need for stronger evidence of international collaboration, clearer service differentiation, and improved documentation. Furthermore, the SEAB defined follow-up actions, including enhanced quality monitoring, standardization of service descriptions, and continuous refinement of the evaluation methodology, thereby ensuring long-term improvement and transparency in the CoS assessment process.

3.4 RESEARCH PROJECTS AND EU COLLABORATIONS

In line with its mission and long-term sustainability strategy, E-RIHS ERIC registered as a legal entity in the European Commission's Participant Portal and obtained its Participant Identification Code (PIC) as soon as operationally possible, in July 2025. This allowed E-RIHS ERIC to take part in European research funding schemes under its own legal personality already within the first months of its operational life.

Participation in project proposals is coordinated with the Committee of National Nodes to ensure alignment with the priorities of the infrastructure and with national capacities.

The decision to engage actively in project applications from the very first months of operation responds to a clear strategic intent: consolidating the role of E-RIHS in the European research landscape and strengthening the collaboration with the research and innovation communities active in heritage science and beyond.

During 2025, proposals were submitted primarily under the Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2025 – Research Infrastructures and Cluster 2 – Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society. Out of five proposals submitted, two of which were retained for funding – a 40% success rate, which is a significant result for a legal entity in its first year of operation.

The two funded proposals are: **CHIRON** — *Continuing Heritage Research Infrastructure Education*. CHIRON is coordinated by University College London (UK) and brings together DARIAH ERIC, E-RIHS ERIC, ARIADNE, the University of Ljubljana, the University of Durham and the University of York. The project aims to transform the HS Academy into a pan-European one-stop-shop for training technical staff across the SSH research infrastructures, developing a Heritage Science Handbook, thematic communities of practice, a mobility programme, a mentorship scheme and an intensive in-person course; **RCH** — *Co-funded European Partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage*. RCH is coordinated by the Fondation des Sciences du Patrimoine (France) and brings together a wide consortium of Member States, Associated Countries and Third Countries to address heritage resilience challenges over the long term. E-RIHS contributes strategically to this forthcoming EU Partnership, positioning its facilities, expertise and data services to support collaborative research activities within the partnership framework. Within the consortium, E-RIHS is a beneficiary, with the Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC, Spain) participating as its affiliated entity.

Beyond these two funded proposals, E-RIHS ERIC also participated as associated partner in the MSCA Doctoral Network proposal **UNCHANGE** — *UNderstanding change in Cultural Heritage: the Next Generation of Experts* (call HORIZON-MSCA-2025-DN-01), coordinated by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

Alongside these newly submitted proposals, E-RIHS ERIC brought into its portfolio two projects already under way thanks to the preparatory work of the E-RIHS ERIC's Founding Members, in particular CNR-ISPC: **ECHOES** — *European Cloud for Heritage OpEn Science*, coordinated by CNRS. ECHOES aims at developing the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH). E-RIHS is in the final stage of formally joining the consortium through an amendment and will lead the work package on long-term sustainability of the future Cloud; **GRAPHIA** — *Knowledge Graphs, AI Services and Next Generation Instrumentation for R&D in Social Sciences and Humanities*, coordinated by OPERAS. E-RIHS collaborates with the other SSH research infrastructures (OPERAS, EHRI, GGP, RESILIENCE) to create the first comprehensive SSH Knowledge Graph enhanced with AI and LLM services.

3.5 CONFERENCES AND OUTREACH EVENTS

The most institutionally significant moment of 2025 was the ERIC Label Ceremony on 22 October 2025 in Copenhagen, held under the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Director General, Vania Virgili, and the Chair of the Committee of National Nodes, Polona Ropret, received the official ERIC plate from the European Commission on behalf of the entire E-RIHS community – a recognition that belongs to all those who have contributed to the creation of E-RIHS ERIC over time.

Throughout the rest of 2025, E-RIHS ERIC was represented at a range of events through the Director General, personnel of the Central Hub, the Chair of the Committee of National Nodes and colleagues from the National Nodes themselves. Each event served either to consolidate the ERIC's position in the EU,

ESFRI and EOSC landscape, to advance collaborations, to engage National Node communities, or to pursue enlargement.

Events attended in a presenting, organising or partner capacity during 2025:

- Connecting Heritage Science to the Heritage of Science, 6–9 April 2025, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria (Egypt) – signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, a milestone in the ERIC’s international outreach towards the MENA region.
- Euro-Bioimaging Virtual Pub, 27 May 2025, online presentation of “E- RIHS services: The contribution of imaging analyses in cultural heritage”.
- ERIC–EDIC Round Table “Generating and Using Data in the Digital Decade”, 30 May 2025, CNR, Rome (Italy). Positioning of E-RIHS ERIC in the inter-ERIC/EDIC dialogue on data policy.
- Europeana 2025. Round Table “Preserve, Protect, Reuse”, 11 June 2025, Polin Museum, Warsaw (Poland). Contribution to the European debate on reuse of cultural-heritage data.
- Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Stakeholders Workshop, 20 June 2025, Florence (Italy) – co-hosted with the Opificio delle Pietre Dure and CNR-ISPC, in preparation for the Ukraine Recovery Conference 2025.
- Archiving 2025 Conference, 24–27 June 2025, Granada (Spain). Focus on the synergies between E-RIHS services and the ECHOES project.
- Archaeoscience Festival, 27 June 2025, Utrecht (Netherlands). E-RIHS.nl outreach event. Dialogue with the Dutch National Node (E-RIHS.nl).
- UK National Science for Heritage Forum, 10 July 2025, UCL, London (United Kingdom). Dialogue with the UK National Node (RICHeS, E-RIHS.uk) and its scientific community.
- Digital Humanities 2025 (DH2025), 8–9 September 2025, University of Siena (Italy) – round table “Beyond Digital Libraries”, a dialogue among institutional EU players in the domain.
- ARCHE Final Event, 11–12 September 2025, Brussels (Belgium). Role of E-RIHS in the future EU Partnership Resilient Cultural Heritage.
- Inauguration of E-RIHS.pl, 16–17 September 2025, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń (Poland). Dialogue with the Polish National Node (E-RIHS.pl) and its scientific community.
- ECHOES Project Workshop, 25–26 September 2025, University of Antwerp (Belgium). Contribution of E-RIHS ERIC in the future Cloud.
- European Researcher’s Night, 30 September 2025, 1st Edition Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage organized by Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain) discussing “The Role of the European Research Infrastructure in Advancing Heritage Science.”
- ERIC Label Ceremony, 22 October 2025, Copenhagen (Denmark). EC event marking the formal recognition of newly established ERICs.
- “Heritage Meets Science” Conference, 6 November 2025, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna (Austria). Dialogue with an active, not-yet-Member country.
- E-RIHS.si meeting, 18 November 2025, University of Primorska, Izola (Slovenia). Dialogue with the Slovenian National Node (E-RIHS.si) and its scientific community. On the occasion, the Director General and the Chair of the Committee of National Nodes of E-RIHS ERIC received the *Award for the Advancement of Heritage Science*, conferred by the Chair and the Deputy National Coordinator of E-RIHS.si.
- UNICHE first co-design workshop, 27 November 2025, E-RIHS Central Hub, Florence (Italy). ECHOES sister project, engaging a partner from E-RIHS National Nodes.
- COLORS project meeting, 3-5 December 2025, E-RIHS Central Hub, Florence (Italy). ECHOES sister project engaging partners from E-RIHS National Nodes and from candidate countries.

E-RIHS Opening Days, 12–14 November 2025, Florence

The E-RIHS Opening Days marked the establishment of the ERIC and the inauguration of the permanent Central Hub premises at Manifattura Tabacchi in Florence. The three-day programme brought together over 100 participants from across Europe: representatives of all eleven founding Members, the Permanent Observer ICCROM, delegations from prospective Members, and contribution from peer research infrastructures (CLARIN, DARIAH and the SSHOC Cluster) and of the ECHOES project.

12 November opened with a live-streamed session with the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (Rome), in memory of Prof. Antonio Sgamellotti (1939–2025), a pioneering figure of E-RIHS. A further moment of remembrance was dedicated to Vincent Detalle (1969–2025), whose dedication marked the French heritage science community. The day then moved on to the third meeting of the Committee of National Nodes, which brought National Coordinators together to advance shared operational priorities, from the Catalogue of Services and the Call for Access to the evolving quality-assessment framework.

On 13 November, the second General Assembly met in the morning to take the core governance decisions of the newly established ERIC, in parallel with the HS Academy technical workshop *A New Generation of Heritage Scientists: Challenges, Vision and Opportunities* – a session entirely designed, organised and moderated by young researchers themselves, who were given the floor to set out their expectations and concrete proposals for the future of the discipline and for the role of the HS Academy in supporting them. In the afternoon, the public workshop *Marking the Establishment of E-RIHS ERIC*, opened by the Director General, was structured around three thematic sessions that placed the National Nodes at centre stage. The contributions were remarkably rich: each Node presented the scientific depth and dynamics of its community, its current flagship activities, its national trajectory and its concrete contribution to the European heritage science ecosystem that E-RIHS now federates.

On 14 November, the joint public workshop *E-RIHS and the European Cultural Heritage Cloud* was followed by the closed technical workshop *ERICs, the Cloud and the Data Space*, co-organised with the ECHOES consortium, consolidating the operational dialogue between the two initiatives on the construction of the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH).

3.6 HS ACADEMY – FRAMEWORK AND FIRST STEPS

The HS Academy (Heritage Science Academy) is the labeled training and capacity-building programme of E-RIHS. Its framework is articulated around several complementary formats – doctoral summer schools, on-site training camps, an online webinar series, short training modules, and thematic user meetings – and is designed to be implemented jointly with the National Nodes. The overall orientation of the HS Academy is guided by the Training Strategy (D4.5, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13148658>).

A defining feature of the HS Academy is Current Topics in Heritage Science, which continued without interruption across the transition to ERIC status thanks to a dedicated Editorial Board of emerging professionals. Edition 3 (2025) was coordinated by Antonina Chaban (CNR – National Institute of Optics, IT) and brought together: Emma Paolin (University of Ljubljana, SI), Teresa Molina (CSIC, ES), Diego Quintero Balbás (CNR-National Institute of Optics, IT), Tjaša Rijavec (University of Ljubljana, SI), Fabiana Di Gianvincenzo (Rijksmuseum, NL). Edition 3 comprised six online lectures from January to June 2025: (1) *Emergency preparedness of library collections*, Céline Allain (Bibliothèque nationale de France, BnF), 23 January 2025; (2) *Laser cleaning of Heritage objects and Monuments: tailored solutions for demanding restoration challenges*, Paraskevi Pouli (Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser (IESL) of the Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (FORTH)), 27 February 2025; (3) *Computational Imaging for Cultural Heritage: Where we are and what is our future?*, Marc Walton (University of Hong Kong HKU), 27 March 2025; (4) *Acoustic emissions techniques applied to historical vehicle engines*, Laura Brambilla (Haute École Arc Conservation-restauration (HE-ARC), Switzerland), 24 April 2025; (5) *Analysis of indigenous*

American objects from the V&A collection, Lucia Burgio (Victoria and Albert Museum, London), 22 May 2025; (6) *Pyrolysis-gas chromatography–mass spectrometry (Py-GC-MS) for heritage analysis*, Jennifer Poulin, (CCI-Canadian Conservation Institute), 19 June 2025. This third series, 2025, has included 555 live participants and generated over 850 views on the E-RIHS YouTube channel. The anonymous participant survey reported an overall satisfaction rating of 9.1/10. The full series is permanently available via the dedicated HS Academy playlist on the E-RIHS EU YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/c/ERIHSEU>).

In parallel, on 9 April 2025, the HS Academy Training Camp *Non-Invasive Characterisation of Archival Heritage by Application of Vibrational Spectroscopic Techniques* was held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, organised by E-RIHS.si in collaboration with the Manuscripts Museum and Center (Cultural Outreach Sector, Bibliotheca Alexandrina) Sci-Her (Ain Shams University) and SloveNile. The one-day programme combined introductory lectures on Raman and infrared spectroscopy with hands-on work on portable FTIR and Raman instruments, delivered by instructors from the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia and the National and University Library of Slovenia, for 25 conservators from Egyptian heritage institutions.

Finally, on 13 November 2025 the HS Academy organised, as part of the Opening Days, the dedicated technical workshop *A New Generation of Heritage Scientists*, entirely designed and moderated by early-career colleagues. The first session presented E-RIHS services relevant to emerging professionals, while the second gave voice to young researchers from heritage science networks in Europe. The workshop yielded a set of inputs that will inform the development of future HS Academy actions.

4. E-RIHS IN THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE

4.1 ESFRI STATUS AND MONITORING

E-RIHS has been included in the ESFRI Roadmap as a Project since 2016. The establishment of E-RIHS ERIC was the prerequisite for requesting progression to Landmark status within the ESFRI Roadmap 2026 cycle.

In December 2025, E-RIHS ERIC completed the ESFRI Monitoring of Scientific Research Infrastructures (MoS) exercise, a key institutional milestone of the ERIC's first year of operation, which mobilised a substantial and concerted effort across the Central Hub and the National Nodes. The Monitoring questionnaire was compiled under the coordination of the Director General, with the support of the Central Hub and in consultation with the Committee of National Nodes, whose members actively contributed the scientific and national-level inputs.

The questionnaire together with the full set of supporting documents was transmitted for information to the General Assembly and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board.

The outcome of the Monitoring and, accordingly, the possible progression to Landmark status on the ESFRI Roadmap 2026, is expected in the course of 2026.

4.2 STRATEGIC POSITIONING IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

In 2025, E-RIHS consolidated its strategic positioning in the European research landscape along three converging axes: research infrastructure cooperation in the Social Sciences and Humanities and with the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), cultural-heritage policy, and digital infrastructures.

Within the SSH Open Cluster (SSHOC), E-RIHS ERIC sits on the Governing Board and is set to assume the Vice-Chair role in 2026, contributing the heritage science perspective to the digital-transformation agenda

of the Social Sciences and Humanities alongside the peer SSH research infrastructures (e.g., CLARIN, DARIAH and EHRI) and ensuring a direct link with the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) through its DIGILAB platform.

E-RIHS plays an active role in the European Partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage, the forthcoming Horizon Europe co-funded partnership announced within the Culture Compass for Europe (November 2025). E-RIHS features among the partners of the approved proposal for the Partnership, thereby contributing to the discussion on how access services can be offered for the benefit of the sector's growth as part of the Partnership's initiatives.

Through the DIGILAB platform and its participation in the ECHOES project (European Cloud for Heritage OpEn Science), E-RIHS contributes to the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH); the grant agreement amendment negotiated during 2025 positions E-RIHS as lead beneficiary of the work package on the long-term sustainability of the Cloud.

4.5 ENLARGEMENT – COUNTRIES IN DIALOGUE

Enlargement and international cooperation are among the strategic priorities of E-RIHS, reflecting both the Statute's provisions on the admission of new Members and Observers and the long-standing recognition of E-RIHS, since 2015, as a Research Infrastructure of global interest by the G7 Senior Officials.

During 2025, the Committee of National Nodes initiated the drafting of the Rules of Procedure of a dedicated Enlargement Board, together with a preliminary list of target countries. The document was presented to the General Assembly in November 2025; its fine-tuning and further discussion are expected during 2026.

The substantive work during 2025 consisted in the active accompaniment of countries whose accession has not yet been possible, aimed at consolidating their national heritage science capacities along E-RIHS lines and, where relevant, supporting the inclusion of heritage science in their national research-infrastructure roadmaps. For the **Czech Republic**, **Norway** and **Switzerland**, this accompaniment was not limited to the issuance of dedicated letters of endorsement: it also included a substantive review of the application dossiers and the provision of supporting material, contributing to the submissions to the 2027 Swiss Roadmap for Research Infrastructures, to the Research Council of Norway (for N-RIHS, coordinated by the University of Oslo) and to the Czech National Roadmap for Large Research Infrastructures 2027–2034 (for E-RIHS.cz, coordinated by the ITAM CAS—Institute of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics of the Czech Academy of Sciences). **Austria** was accompanied through direct institutional dialogue with the emerging Austrian National Node, culminating in the participation of the Director General and of the Chair of the Committee of National Nodes in the Heritage Meets Science conference held in Vienna on 6 November 2025.

At international level, E-RIHS ERIC consolidated structured cooperation with two non-EU partners building national capacities along E-RIHS lines: **Egypt**, with a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Director General and the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina on 6 April 2025, and the ongoing establishment of an Egyptian national node; and **Brazil**, through the continued accompaniment of the ANTECIPA programme, expressly inspired by the E-RIHS National Node model.

Additional exploratory dialogue was maintained during 2025 with **Belgium**, **Denmark**, **Germany**, **Greece**, **Portugal** and **Sweden**, coordinated by the Director General and the Chair of the Committee of National Nodes.

Taken together, these initiatives confirm that enlargement is being pursued as a gradual, demand-driven process, positioning E-RIHS ERIC as an open and attractive reference point for heritage science communities within Europe and beyond.

5. OPERATIONS AND OUTLOOK

5.1 HUMAN RESOURCES AND RECRUITMENT

In its first operational year, E-RIHS ERIC laid the foundations of its permanent workforce. On the basis of the staff planning presented to the General Assembly as part of the 2025 budget, which foresees five Central Hub positions, the Director General (DG) proceeded with recruitment step by step rather than opening all vacancies at once. This gradual approach allowed the composition and dynamics of the Central Hub to be shaped in alignment with the build-up of operational activities, while reserving the bandwidth required for the concurrent strategic workstreams that engaged the DG and the Central Hub throughout the second half of 2025: the preparation and launch of the 1st Call for Access, the participation in Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025 - Research Infrastructures project proposals, and the ESFRI monitoring.

All recruitment was carried out in accordance with the approved reference framework: the Human Resources Policy, the Recruitment Procedures and the Gender Equality Plan 2025–2027. Each vacancy notice was published on the E-RIHS website, on the EURAXESS portal and across the E-RIHS social-media channels, and relayed at national level by the National Nodes. Each vacancy remained open for at least one month, and for every position a dedicated search committee was appointed, composed of colleagues from the National Nodes.

The 2025 recruitment procedures led to the selection of the following profiles:

- Communication Assistant - advertised on 11 August 2025, proclaimed on 21 October 2025. Selected: Federica Baldassari, in duty since 1 January 2026.
- Financial Officer - advertised on 9 October 2025, proclaimed on 16 January 2026. Selected: Chiara Mustarelli, taking up duty on 1 April 2026.
- DIGILAB Senior Officer - advertised on 2 December 2025, proclaimed on 17 February 2026. Selected: Anaïs Guillem, taking up duty on 1 April 2026.
- Application Developer Senior Officer - by SG determination of 1 March 2026, on the basis of the DIGILAB senior officer ranking. Selected: Herbert Natta, taking up duty on 1 April 2026.

Taken together, the vacancies drew candidates of a wide spectrum of seniority and from approximately twenty-two different nationalities, spanning EU Member States (Italy, Portugal, France, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Germany), non-EU European countries (Turkey, Albania, Armenia), the Americas (United States, Mexico, Brazil), the MENA region (Egypt, Iran), Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenya), and Asia (India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Philippines).

Variation in the number of applications across positions reflects the specificity of each profile rather than the reach of the calls: the Communication Assistant call attracted 55 applications, while the more specialised Financial Officer and DIGILAB Senior Officer calls drew smaller, more targeted pools (9 and 10 respectively).

Only one position of the approved 2025 staff plan remains to be filled: the Community and Institutional Affairs Senior Officer, responsible for supporting the work of the statutory and advisory boards and the development of the HS Academy. The corresponding vacancy notice was published in early 2026 and the selection process is ongoing.

5.2 PROCUREMENT

Procurement activity was governed by the E-RIHS Procurement Rules, which respect the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and competition set out in Article 11 of the Statutes. Given the

transitional character of 2025 and the limited size of the Central Hub team, procurement focused on the establishment of the operational conditions of the Consortium, and in particular on:

- the engagement of specialist accounting, tax and corporate consultancy and of specialist labour consultancy services, formalised in August 2025 as direct awards and essential to enable the administrative, fiscal and employment-law operation of the ERIC from its very first months;
- the service contract linked to the free-of-charge use agreement for building B8 at Manifattura Tabacchi (21 October 2025), covering facility management and the related insurance coverage; the ERIC's financial contribution is limited to cleaning and electricity;
- the moving and transport services required to install the Central Hub in building B8;
- the supporting services for the Opening Days (12–14 November 2025), including travel, event logistics and communication.

5.3 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The first reporting period covered a partial financial year, reflecting the establishment of E-RIHS ERIC on 28 March 2025. On this basis, the 2025 Members' contributions were calculated on a pro-rata basis, amounting to €802,070 for the reporting period. The corresponding pro-rata 2025 budget was adopted by the General Assembly at its first meeting on 28 March 2025 (Resolution GA1-10), and a preliminary 2025 financial statement was presented to the General Assembly at its second meeting on 13 November 2025 as an interim snapshot of budget execution.

In accordance with Article 22(2) of the Statutes, the budgetary and financial management elements foreseen for this first Annual Report will be part of a separate document – the 2025 financial statement – which, which was audited and received a positive unqualified opinion (Independent Auditor's Report of 28 May 2026), and presented and approved by the General Assembly on 15 June 2026.

5.4 KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2026

On the basis of the activities carried out during 2025 and of the guidance received from the General Assembly (GA), the Committee of National Nodes (CNN) and the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board (SEAB), the key priorities for 2026 are:

- **Finalisation of the Scientific Strategy 2026–2030**, on the basis of the mandate endorsed by the CNN in October 2025 and of the first draft presented in November 2025 to the GA and the CNN. The endorsed timeline foresees a draft to be presented to the CNN in January 2026, an open consultation in February–March 2026, a review by the Scientific and Ethics Advisory Board in May 2026, and the submission of the final document to the General Assembly in June 2026.
- **Preparation of the Scientific Plan**, translating the Scientific Strategy 2026–2030 into an operational roadmap.
- **Launch and management of the second Call for Access in Spring 2026**, building on the lessons learned from the first Call, with newly included services in the Catalogue of Services and a more targeted communication strategy to be developed in cooperation with the National Nodes.
- **Continuous improvement of the Call for Access management procedures**, at the level of the Catalogue of Services, of the evaluation of proposals, and of the organisational procedures within the Committee of National Nodes, the key body responsible for the access service.
- **Consolidation of the Central Hub team**, through the taking up of duty of the officers recruited in 2025 (Communication Assistant, Financial Officer, Senior Officer for DIGILAB and Data Steward, Application Developer Senior Officer) and the recruitment procedure for the last foreseen position

- the Senior Officer for Community and Institutional Affairs – in line with the Human Resources Policy and the Gender Equality Plan.
- **Strengthening of E-RIHS ERIC’s role in EU projects**, with the starting of CHIRON, the finalisation of the ECHOES and GRAPHIA Grant Agreement amendments, and active engagement in new project opportunities.
- **Operationalisation of the Enlargement Strategy**, with a view to structuring the dialogue with target countries and preparing the ground for future applications for Membership or Observer status.
- **Development of the permanent premises arrangements** with Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze and CNR, and subsequently with E-RIHS ERIC, once the acquisition of building B8 by the Fondazione is finalised.
- **Full roll-out of the HS Academy** with its full portfolio of formats – summer schools, training camps, Current Topics webinars, webinar modules, user meetings.
- **Launch of the procedure for the recruitment of the Director General**, in accordance with the working group established at GA2, with a view to a selection in the course of 2026.
- **Follow-up of the ESFRI Monitoring submission and active preparation of the ESFRI Roadmap 2026**, with a view to the progression to Landmark status.

APPENDIX — KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The table below presents, in compact form, the KPIs of E-RIHS ERIC for the reporting period 28 March – 31 December 2025, drawn from the E-RIHS Quality System (https://www.e-rihs.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/E-RIHS_GA1-12-Quality-System-approved.pdf). The targets shown in the table are annual, while the 2025 actuals reflect a partial first year, since E-RIHS ERIC began operating from June 2025. Only the KPIs that are both relevant for this first year and documented in the governance and operational records consolidated during the period are included.

#	INDICATOR	TARGET PER YEAR	2025
FINANCES AND DEVELOPMENT			
2	Number of members in E-RIHS	Increase numbers of formal engagement yearly	11 founding members + 1 permanent observer
USER ACCESS			
5	Number of user requests for access	Full operations: 600 users/year for physical platforms; >100 applications/year; DIGILAB considered when ready	1st Call (Autumn 2025) - 513 user requests to facilities (DIGILAB launched); - 75 proposals
7	Access demand	> 100% yearly across all platforms	ARCHLAB 86% DIGILAB 133% FIXLAB 177% MOLAB 392%
HS ACADEMY			
13	Participants in dissemination and education events	1000 participants/year for dissemination events; 84 participants/year for education initiatives	- 555 participants + 852 views in dissemination events - 25 in education initiatives
14	Hours of dissemination events	9 hours/year for dissemination events	7 hrs
17	Educational/training quality feedback	> 80%	91%
COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH			
21	Website and social media activities	Steady increase based on previous baseline data. Website visits with an average session duration. Social media metrics include Facebook, X, LinkedIn and YouTube	Website https://www.e-rihs.eu Sessions: 13,576 Engaged sessions: 7,844 Engagement rate (Engaged sessions / Sessions): 57.78% Total page views: 26,799 Average engagement time per active user: 1m 36s Social media:

			- Facebook 1,181 followers, 53,872 views; - X 1,089 followers; - LinkedIn 87,040 Impressions, 1,947 reactions; - YouTube 562 subscribers, 135 videos and 3,227 views
22	Direct contact engagement (events)	Steady increase post-initial operations	19 events in a presenting, organising or partner capacity: - 5 EU institutional positioning; - 6 collaborations with EU projects and peer RIs; - 4 National Node engagement; 1 enlargement; - 1 international outreach beyond Europe; - 1 public engagement; - 1 flagship institutional event – the E-RIHS Opening Days (Florence, 12–14 Nov 2025, 120 participants).

2025 - Notes to the Financial Statements

1. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Balance Sheet - Assets and liabilities at 31.12.2025				
		2025		2024
ASSETS		686.153		-
NON CURRENT ASSETS		1.166		-
Intangible assets		-		-
Advances on intangible assets		-		-
Tangible assets (plant, property and equipment)		1.166		-
Advances on tangible assets		-		-
CURRENT ASSETS		684.987		-
Inventories		-		-
Long term credits		-		-
Short term credits		7		-
- credits for members' statutory contribution in cash	-		-	
- other current credits and receivables	7		-	
Cash and cash equivalents		683.898		-
Prepayments and accrued income		1.082		-
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		686.153		-
EQUITY				
Capital and other permanent contributions from Members		-		-
Reserves		-		-
Accumulated profits		-		-
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		-		-
Long-term financial debts and loans		-		-
Other long-term debts and liabilities		-		-
Employee's severance indemnity		-		-
Long-term provisions		-		-
CURRENT LIABILITIES		686.153		-
Short-term financial debts		-		-
Advance payments for externally funded projects		-		-
Contributions to be paid		-		-
Other short-term debts and liabilities		49.042		-
Deferred income		637.111		-
- deferred income for members' statutory contribution in cash (carryover)				
previous financial years	-		-	
current financial year	637.111		-	
- others deferred income	-			
- accrued expenses	-		-	

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT					
		2025		2024	
Revenues			164.959		-
	National and international grants and contributions		164.959		-
	▪ monetary contribution of ERIHS ERIC Members	802.070		-	
	▪ host premium cash contribution	-		-	
	▪ contribution project externally funded	-		-	
	▪ use of carry over of previous years (+)	-		-	
	▪ carry over of the year (-)	(637.111)			
	Contributions in-kind		-		-
	▪ contributions in kind by hosting country	-		-	
	▪ contributions in kind by partner	-		-	
	Other revenues		-		-
Operating costs			162.480		-
	Costs for raw materials, supplies and goods	922		-	
	Costs for services	160.357		-	
	Staff costs	-		-	
	Costs of rents, concessions and royalties for trademarks	537		-	
	Contributions	-		-	
	Other operating costs	664		-	
	Resources committed in-kind to E-RIHS from contributors	-		-	
Ebitda (Earning before Interests, Taxes, Depreciations and Amortizations)			2.479		-
Depreciation			130		-
Write-downs for impairment of tangible and intangible assets			-		-
Ebit (Earnings before interests and taxes)			2.349		-
Financial income and expenses					
	Financial income		-		-
	Financial charges (-)				
Income from investments			-		-
Value adjustments to financial assets			-		-
Result before tax			2.349		-
Income tax			2.349		-
Result for the year			-		-

Statement of Cash Flows

Financial statements as at 31/12/2025

Financial Statement – Indirect method

	Amount as at 31/12/2025	Amount as at 31/12/2024
A) Financial flow from operations (indirect method)		
Net profit (loss) for the year	-	-
Income taxes	2.349	-
Interest expenses/(income)		
(Dividends)		
(Capital gains)/Capital losses resulting from asset disposal	-	-
1) Profit (loss) for the year before income taxes	2.349	
Adjustments for non-monetary elements with no offset in working capital		
Accruals to provisions		-
Depreciation of assets	130	-
Writedowns due to impairment		
Adjustment of value of financial assets and liabilities of derivative financial instruments not involving cash transactions		
Other increasing/(decreasing) adjustments for non-monetary items		-
Total adjustments for non-monetary items with no offset in net working capital	130	
2) Financial flow before changes to the net working capital	2.479	
Changes in net working capital		
Decrease/(Increase) of inventories		
Decrease/(Increase) of credits towards contributors - Members		
Decrease/(Increase) of credits towards other contributors		
Increase/(Decrease) in payables due to suppliers	40.865	
Decrease/(Increase) in accrued income and deferred expenses	(1.082)	
(Increase)/Decrease in accrued liabilities and deferred income	637.111	
Other decreases/(Other increases) of net working capital	8.169	
Total changes in net working capital	685.064	
3) Financial flow after changes to the net working capital	687.542	
Other adjustments		
Interest collected/(paid)		
(income taxes paid)	(2.349)	
Dividends collected		
(Use of provisions)		
Other collections/(payments)		
Total other adjustments	(2.349)	
Financial flow from operations (A)	685.193	
B) Financial flow from investing activities		
Tangible fixed assets		
(Investments)	(1.295)	
Disinvestments	-	-
Intangible fixed assets		
(Investments)	-	-
Disinvestments	-	
Financial fixed assets		
(Investments)		
Disinvestments	-	-
Financial assets not classified as noncurrent		
(Investments)		
Disinvestments		
(Acquisition of company branches net of cash and cash equivalents)		
Sale of company branches net of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash flow from investing activities (B)	(1.295)	
C) Financial flow from financing activities		
Loan capital		
Increase/(Decrease) in short-term payables due to banks		
New loans (Contribution quotas due to the Partners)		-
(Reimbursement of loans)		
Equity		
Increase in paid share capital		
(Capital reimbursement)		
Disposal/(Purchase) of treasury shares		
(Dividends and advances on dividends paid)		
Cash flow from financing activities (C)		
Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents (A ± B ± C)	683.898	
Effect of exchange rates on cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		
bank deposits	-	-
cheques		
Cash and equivalents on hand	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	-	-
Of which, not freely usable		
Cash and cash equivalents at the year end		
bank deposits	683.898	-
cheques		
Cash and equivalents on hand	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	683.898	-
Of which, not freely usable		
Balance difference	-	-

2. NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Foreword

On March 28th, 2025, E-RIHS ERIC was established by the European Commission.

The Financial Statements, composed of the Balance Sheet, the Profit and Loss Account and the Cash Flow Statement are complemented by the Notes to the Financial Statements (these Explanatory Notes), and by the Activity and Results description that details performed activities and achieved results as for the E-RIHS ERIC 2025 Activity Plan and Provisional Budget adopted by E-RIHS ERIC General Assembly on 27 May 2025 (Resolution No. E-RIHS_GA1-10-Annual-Budget-2025).

Accounting Criteria

These Financial Statements have been compiled in conformity with the IPSAS (International Public Sector Accounting Standards), international accounting standards issued by the International Public Sector Accounting Standard Board (IPSASB), and in process of being adopted by the European Commission within the meaning of Council Directive No 2011/85/EU of 8th November 2011, on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States.

The decision to voluntarily adopt an accounting system that can be connected to international principles is consistent with the process of harmonisation started by the EU Commission, but not yet completed. For this purpose, it is relevant to recall the “Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament towards implementing harmonised public sector accounting standards in Member States concerning the suitability of IPSAS for the Member States”, published in March 2013.

E-RIHS ERIC is set up as an international organization with scopes of general interest typical of an entity referable to the public sector, it is not a Public entity. E-RIHS ERIC should therefore be able to relate to its Members in different countries in a common language. This should be adopted in all matters and at all levels, and thus also in the model of presentation of economic-financial topics that support annual accounts and budgets.

The use of international accounting standards referable to the public sector, taking into account the specific character and scopes of E-RIHS ERIC, adequately conforms to the legal characteristics of the Entity and to its functions and scope, allows the development of well-defined best practices, the impact of which on the financial aspects is measurable and effective. The use of international accounting standards, in fact, allows information on the Financial Statements to be presented in a common way for users/stakeholders of different nationalities.

By adopting these international standards, it is ensured that:

- the information is relevant, reliable, comparable and understandable;
- the used terminology is common, appropriate and explanatory among Members and for similar international organizations outside Europe;
- the Financial Statements are auditable by the International Standard of Audit by auditors from different nations;
- a host country change - and thus any site change - is not relevant for the comparability of information and models, books and records of the accounting system;
- the accounting system is able to present the in-kind contribution model, and to provide analytical accounting for projects and, in case, separate accounting for economic activities.

The aim of the Financial Statements is to provide information on the assets and liabilities, the profit or loss and changes in the financial structure of the Consortium, useful to a wide range of users.

The Financial Statements are prepared within a general-purpose framework.

The Financial Statements are compiled in accordance with the principles of clarity and transparency and provide a correct and exhaustive framework of information on property relations, as well as economic and financial relations implemented by the Consortium in carrying out its activities. They are

compiled considering international accounting standards for public sector (IPSAS) and integrated in order to be consistent with the legal and effective structure of E-RIHS ERIC and its scopes.

Of the various options allowed by IPSAS 1, the Consortium has chosen to present the layout of the balance sheet distinguishing between current and non-current items, and the layout of the profit and loss account classifying the expenses by nature, adding some information on destination, when relevant.

In its drawing-up, the following principles have been observed.

The items have been evaluated prudently, taking into account the perspective of the continuity of the activities, as well as the economic function of an asset or liability.

Only incomes and expenditures related to the financial year have been accounted, independently of the day of encashment or payment.

The risks and losses related to the financial year have been accounted for, even if known after the end of the financial year.

These Notes have been compiled with the aim of clarifying, completing and analysing the information contained in the balance sheet and in the profit and loss account, in addition to providing information on the applied evaluation criteria, on movements that have taken place, and changes in various assets and liabilities. These Notes are an integral part of the financial documents; they serve to present the Financial Statements and provide descriptive and schematic information, with particular reference to property aspects, as well as economic and financial aspects of the overall management.

Evaluation Criteria

The Financial Statements are compiled in accordance with the principles of clarity and transparency and provide a correct and exhaustive framework of information on property relations, as well as economic and financial relations implemented by the Consortium in carrying out its activities. They are compiled considering international accounting standards for public sector (IPSAS), applied coherently with the legal nature of an ERIC and with its scopes.

Balance Sheet

Items in the Balance Sheet are classified into/distinguished as current/non-current.

Assets

Assets have been classified as current assets when:

- they have been realised during the normal operating cycle of the institution;
- they are cash or equivalent complement not restricted in its use;
- collection is due within 12 months from the balance sheet date.

Assets realisable within the operating cycle have been classified as current.

Non-current assets shall include tangible assets and intangible assets (in general, all assets not related to the operating cycle and realisable after 12 months from the balance sheet date).

Prepayments and accrued income

This item measures income and expenses whose competence is delayed or advanced with respect to cash or documentary.

Liabilities

Liabilities have been considered current liabilities when:

- a) they are extinct in the course of the normal operating cycle of the institution;

b) extinction is due within 12 months of the balance sheet date.

Other liabilities, i.e., those not related to the operating cycle and all other institutional liabilities, are classified as current if their extinction is due within 12 months from the balance sheet date.

Otherwise, they are recognised as non-current liabilities.

Deferred Incomes and Accrual Expenses

Deferred incomes includes the amount of funds received during the year and not yet fully used by 31.12 for the purposes for which they were intended. They will therefore continue to produce utility in coming years, for the same purposes. This item represents the carry-over for balances of the subsequent year to that under review. In this regard, the Consortium is obliged to operate in future years in fulfilment of the mandate assigned by the Member States (when they commit themselves to contribute the Consortium with their Membership fees), included the contribution by Italy acting in the quality of Hosting Country.

Accrual expenses are expenses incurred and assessed on an accrual basis but not yet paid.

Profit and Loss Account

The drawing-up of the profit and loss account is regulated by the IPSAS, integrated and conformed to be consistent with the characteristics and scopes of E-RIHS ERIC.

Incomes

Incomes are increases in benefits connected to the administrative year.

Costs/Expenses

Costs/expenses are decreases in economic benefits of the administrative year. The analysis of costs has been explained in the overview of profit and loss accounts using a classification based on their nature.

In-kind Contributions

Contributions in-kind are included in the Financial Statements on the basis of specific detailed reports produced by the Entity who provided them.

In-kind, non-monetary, contributions will be distinguished (when realised) between:

- 1) those strictly related to the cost of the production factors (exhausting their utilities during the ordinary cycle);
- 2) those strictly related to covering investments (in intangible and tangible assets), if any.

Anyway, for in-kind contribution accounting procedures and valorisation, IPSAS Principle n.23 applies.

Assets

Non-current Assets

Balance as at 31/12/2024	Balance as at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	-	-

Tangible Assets

Balance as at 31/12/2024	Balance as at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	1.166	1.166

The composition is as follows:

Description	Initial cost	Investment/ disinvestment	Final cost	Amortization/ Depreciation 2025	Amortization/ Depreciation fund	Residual value
Tangible Assets						
Various equipment	-	1.295	1.295	130	130	1.165
Total	-	1.295	1.295	130	130	1.165

Current Assets

Balance as at 31/12/2024	Balance as at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	684.987	684.987

Inventories

No values are entered for these items.

Long-term credits

No values are entered for these items.

Short-term Credits

The balance is divided according to the deadlines of the credits:

Description	Within 12 months	Over 12 months	Over 5 years	Total
<i>Credit for members' contribution in cash</i>				
Member residue	-			-
<i>Other current credits and receivables</i>				
- Advances to suppliers				-
- Previdencial charges in advance	7			7
- Tax advances				-
- Contribution to collect				-
- Other receivables				-
Total	7	-	-	7

Cash and Cash Equivalents

The balance represents cash at the bank at the end of the financial year. It represents liquid assets, cash equivalents and prepaid cards at the end of the year.

Description	Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
Bank deposit	-	683.898	683.898
Prepaid credit cards	-	-	
Total	-	683.898	683.898

Prepayments and Accrued Income

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	1.082	1.082

The item represents prepaid expenses whose utility is postponed to the next year, referred mainly to insurances.

Equity and Liabilities

Equity

No values are entered for these items.

Non-current Liabilities

No values are entered for these items.

Current Liabilities

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	686.153	686.153

Other short-term debts and liabilities

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	49.042	49.042

Debts are valued at their nominal value.

The composition of the aforementioned amounts is as follows:

Description	Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
Debts to suppliers and collaborators	-	40.840	40.840
Debts to Director		1.433	1.433
Debts to social security institutions	-	3.415	3.415
Tax liabilities	-	2.349	2.349
Debts to others		1.005	1.005
Total	-	49.042	48.037

The item "Debts to suppliers and collaborators" includes debts to third parties, mainly related to services received, accrued but not paid as at the end of the year.

The item "Debts to social security institutions" refers to the director's social security contributions that were accrued but not paid at year-end.

The item "Tax liabilities" refers to the debt for IRAP (regional tax).

Deferred Income and Accrued Expenses

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	637.111	637.111

The item breaks down as follows:

Description	
deferred income	
Value as at 01/01/2025	-
deferred income 2025 (carry over)	637.111
use of carry over from previous years	
deferred income 2025 - others	
Value as at 31/12/2025	637.111
accrued expenses	
Value as at 01/01/2025	-
accrued expenses (+/-)	
Value as at 31/12/2025	-

The balance sheet item "Deferred income – carry over" measures the portion of the contribution funded by the Members for the activities of the E-RIHS ERIC, deferred to next year according to the E-RIHS ERIC Preliminary budget 2025-2028.

Profit and Loss Account

Revenues

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	164.959	164.959

The item breaks down as follows:

Description	Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
Membership Fee		802.070	802.070
Host premium cash contribution			
Contribution project externally funded			
use of carry over of previous years			
- carry over of the year		(637.111)	(637.111)
National and international grants and contributions		164.959	164.959
Contribution in kind	-	-	
Other revenues	-	-	
Total	-	164.959	164.959

“National and international grants and contributions” item refers to the cash contribution (statutory membership fees) for the financial year allocated by the Members for the Consortium and attributable to 2025.

Costs

The Consortium, in the context of purchases realized, and within the limits of the Statute, may use VAT exemptions granted on the basis of Article 143(1)(g) and Article 151(1)(b) of Council Directive 2006/112/EC, and in accordance with Articles 50 and 51 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 282/2011 of the Council, and on the basis of Article 12 of Directive 2008/118/EC.

When the exemption was not possible to call for, the VAT was included in the cost to which it refers. At the time of drafting these Financial Statements, Italy (in the quality of Hosting Country), has not yet identified its own Contact Point responsible for signing the VISA (or awarding the VISA exemption) to purchases made from Suppliers residing in UE or outside UE.

Operating Costs

Costs for Raw Materials, Supplies, Consumables and Goods

This category includes costs incurred for the supply of consumables, office stationery, and conference gadgets.

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	922	922

Costs for Services

It has been decided to detail the item service costs, to facilitate the clarity of these Financial

Statements, into the following categories of expenses:

Description	Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
General Director (remuneration and social security contribution)		64.590	64.590
Maintenance		3.796	3.796
Transport and shipping		54	54
Travel costs (employees, collaborators, and bodies)		15.891	15.891
Legal, fiscal, labour and start up operation consultancy		24.912	24.912
Keeping accounting records and Financial Statement drafting		18.720	18.720
Advertising and communication		994	994
Other administrative collaborations		7.440	7.440
Auditors fees		8.000	8.000
Electricity costs		1.337	1.337
Workshops, seminars and publications		13.650	13.650
Insurances		50	50
Bank charges		109	109
Postal charges		8	8
Other services		806	806
Total	-	160.357	160.357

Staff Costs

This item includes the cost of staff directly employed in E-RIHS ERIC.

At 31/12/2025, E-RIHS ERIC has not people hired with the status of employee.

Costs of rents, concessions and royalties for trademarks

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	537	537

Description	31.12.2024	31.12.2025
Licences		15
Equipment hire		522
Total		537

The property used as headquarters of the ERIC is granted on free loan by Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze.

Other Operating Costs

This item concerns taxes and other small administrative expenses.

Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
-	664	664

Depreciation (of Tangible and Intangible Assets)

Depreciation is calculated based on the asset's useful life and its use in production.

Depreciation for the first financial year is reduced to half.

Description		Depreciation
Total intangible assets		-
Tangible Assets		
Various equipment	20,00%	130
Total tangible assets		130
Total Depreciation		130

Financial Income and Expenses

Description	Balance at 31/12/2024	Balance at 31/12/2025	Difference
Financial income	-	-	-
Financial charges			
Total			

The item "Financial charges" includes exchange rate costs.

Income from Investments

No values are entered for these items.

Value adjustments to financial assets

No values are entered for these items.

Income tax

In 2025, E-RIHS ERIC carried on only non-commercial activities, but, since it is subject to Italian fiscal legislation, it has to calculate IRAP. About this tax, E-RIHS ERIC adopts the "remuneration system" (art.10 of Legislative Decree 446/1997); this system provides that the tax base is determined from the sums paid for salaries of the employees, for incomes assimilated and for remuneration paid for coordinated and continuous collaborations or for activities of self-employment not practised professionally.

IRAP calculated for the current year amounts to € 2.349.

Events after the Reporting date

Following IPSAS 14, this paragraph reports about events that have occurred between the reporting date (December 31st 2025) and the date when these Financial Statements have been approved by the Executive Director and thus are authorized for delivery.

E-RIHS ERIC has been invited to join the ECHOES project. The amendment request (AMD-101157364-26), coordinated by CNRS, was launched on 6 January 2026, and E-RIHS ERIC promptly signed the required declaration on 12 January 2026. Following revisions by the Coordinator, the updated request was declared admissible by the Commission on 29 April 2026 and is now in the Decision phase, with the formal decision expected by the end of June 2026.

Florence, 20 May 2026

Vania Virgili
E-RIHS ERIC Director General

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Vania Virgili'.

Vania Virgili
20.05.2026
21:39:40
GMT+02:00



WWW.E-RIHS.EU | CO@E-RIHS.EU

E-RIHS ERIC | Central Hub

c/o Manifattura Tabacchi, Via delle Cascine 35
50144 Florence, Italy

Fiscal Code: 94340580482

VAT Number: 07478730489

Certified Email: e-rihs@mypec.eu