

ICTS SOCIB Glider Fleet Access Protocol

Competitive Open Access

On-Demand Access

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MINISTERIO
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CSIC
CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS



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Protocol subject to approval by the Executive Committee

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "**Unique Scientific and Technical Infrastructure**" (**ICTS**) refers to cutting-edge R&D infrastructures that, either individually or through coordinating multiple facilities, provide services to conduct high-quality, cutting-edge research and enable the transmission, exchange, and preservation of knowledge, technology transfer, and innovation promotion.

The ultimate goal is to make available to the scientific, technological, and industrial community, both nationally and internationally, cutting-edge **scientific and technical** infrastructures, essential for the development of competitive and high-quality research. This includes those technical resources that are unique or exceptional in their field, whose importance and strategic nature justify their availability to the entire R&D&I community.

In this context, **SOCIB** offers access to its **Glider Fleet** to the scientific, industrial, and technological communities. This document outlines the different modalities available for accessing the fleet and details the guidelines for submitting applications for **Competitive Open Access**. It also explains the **criteria and procedures** to ensure the scientific and technical quality of selected projects and their **prioritization** based on quality, technical and logistical feasibility, or other parameters.

The access modalities for users are:

a. Competitive Open Access

Competitive Open Access (COA) offers users interested in using the glider fleet, as part of their R&D projects, priority and advantageous access. To obtain COA, it is necessary to participate in **Access Calls**. In these calls, the proposals received are evaluated based on scientific-technical interest by an External Access Committee. The advantages of this type of access are reflected in each of the Access Calls, offering, for example, a reduction in the usage fees of the gliders. In the corresponding section of this document (3.1 [Competitive Open Access](#)), the mechanisms and criteria that allow for this type of access are detailed.

b. On-Demand Access

On-Demand Access is not tied to any specific access call. Applications for this type of access, which can be submitted at any time, are evaluated by an Internal Panel. Applicants can submit requests at any time via email to glider.access@socib.es. Access to the fleet under this modality depends on the availability of gliders and technical staff. The costs for using gliders under this access type are outlined in the SOCIB service fee sheet, available in the [Institutional Repository of the ICTS SOCIB](#).

2. RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE

The composition of the **glider fleet** can be found in the [dedicated section on the SOCIB website](#).

To operate the glider fleet (preparing missions, balancing and piloting gliders, data download management, etc.), SOCIB has a team **of two technicians**. SOCIB also has a team of field technicians and vessels capable of launching missions from Palma Bay, Mallorca (other geographical mission start/end points may be available upon request). Additionally, SOCIB's **scientific team** ensures data quality control and monitors glider performance during missions.

The **resources** made available to applicants include:

- Access to the glider fleet.
- Qualified personnel to operate gliders (platforms and sensors), including launch, operation, and recovery logistics.
- 24/7 operation for piloting gliders at sea.
- Access to a collaborative piloting system.
- Real-time data reception (within 8-12 hours).
- Glider mission reports (upon completion).
- Data management services (e.g., data processing, archiving, publication in SOCIB's repository, DOI assignment, real-time visualization, and semi-automated quality control, distribution to major European data portals).
- Quality control of scientific data in delayed mode.

3. TYPES OF ACCESS

3.1. COMPETITIVE OPEN ACCESS

SOCIB offers national and international scientific, technological, and industrial users the opportunity to access its glider fleet through Competitive **Open Access Calls**. This modality allows access to autonomous underwater vehicles for research, equipment testing, or monitoring activities.

Annual **Competitive Open Access Calls** are published on SOCIB's website on the [Access](#) section of the SOCIB website.

To access the glider fleet under the **Competitive Open Access** modality, the requesting team must **submit a proposal** using the application form available on the [SOCIB website](#), once the corresponding call has been opened. To facilitate the preparation of the proposal, the scientific and technical team of the glider fleet can advise and guide interested parties in its development, answering technical queries, suggesting time estimates, areas of interest, proposing to avoid high maritime traffic areas or fisheries, considering currents, etc.

Proposals will be evaluated and notified in four phases:

PHASE I: Internal evaluation panel

- Evaluation Team: Fleet of Gliders Facility team.
- Evaluation Type: Technical/operational feasibility of the mission.
- Outcome: If accepted, the proposal moves to Phase II. If rejected, the applicant team will be notified by email.

PHASE II: External Access Committee

- Evaluation Team: The **External Access Committee** (composition available in the following [document](#)) evaluates the scientific and technical quality of proposals that passed Phase I and prioritizes them based on a public and transparent evaluation process.
- Evaluation: The scientific and technical quality of the proposal will be evaluated, as well as the experience and scientific excellence of the requesting team. The Committee may request additional information from the requesting team if deemed necessary.
 - Evaluation criteria: The final evaluation will be the result of the sum of points based on the following criteria:
 - Scientific excellence (originality and innovation) [10 points]
 - General technical quality of the proposal [10 points]
 - Qualifications and complementarity of the research team [5 points]
 - The External Access Committee will consider all proposals, prioritizing:

- Those that aim to highlight novel hypotheses of scientific, technological, or social importance.
- Those that are relevant to understanding the physical and biogeochemical processes of the Mediterranean Sea.
- In the case of proposals that have been subjected to peer review (e.g., those from a project approved under the National Plan), the **Internal Panel**, having deemed their technical feasibility appropriate, may consider the proposal as **APPROVED**, with only a weighting by the **External Access Committee** being necessary if it is required to prioritize the proposals received during the call.
- Result: each proposal will be assigned a score between 0 and 25 points, with a minimum of 14 points required for approval. If the glider usage capacity requested by the proposals exceeds the operational capacity of the Fleet of Gliders Facility, only the proposals with the highest scores that do not exceed the operational capacities of the Glider Facility will be approved.

PHASE III: Notification to Applicants

- Team in charge of notification: Internal panel.
- Notification: After the evaluation phase conducted by the External Access Committee, each applicant team will be notified of the assessment of the submitted proposal and the final evaluation, which may result in **ACCEPTED** or **REJECTED**. In the event that the proposal is rejected, information may be provided about possible resources, deadlines for appeals, and competent authorities for resolution.

PHASE IV: Resolution of the Call

The final resolution will be published on the SOCIB website, in the [Access](#) section.

3.2. ACCESS ON-DEMAND

ICTS SOCIB is continuously open to receiving requests for the use of its glider fleet under the **Access on-Demand modality**. This access modality lacks the advantages that can be obtained through Competitive Open Access.

To submit a request under the Access on-Demand modality, it is necessary to complete and submit a web form.

The proposals received will be evaluated as follows:

- Evaluation team: Internal panel.
- Type of evaluation: technical feasibility of the mission.
- Response: within 15 business days following the receipt of the proposal.
- Result: if the proposal is accepted, it will be included in the glider mission calendar.
- Notification: the applicant team will be notified of the feasibility or non-feasibility of the proposal and the associated costs in carrying it out.

It is recommended that applicants, prior to submitting their proposals, contact the glider fleet's technical team (glider.access@socib.es), who can assist those interested in the technical configuration of the missions.

Cost of Access on-Demand

The daily cost for use and other expenses derived from the use of the fleet are detailed in the rate sheet available on ICTS SOCIB [corporate website](#). The total amount of all services provided through Access on-Demand will be covered by the applicant.

*We research the sea;
we share the future*



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