

Best practices guide

From the
“Do’s and don'ts industry workshops”
EuroCC2 & CASTIEL2-WP4
Fall 2024

With NCC Netherlands and NCC Slovakia

"Original ways to interact with industry – part 1"

Inputs extracted from the presentations made by NCC Netherlands and NCC Slovakia

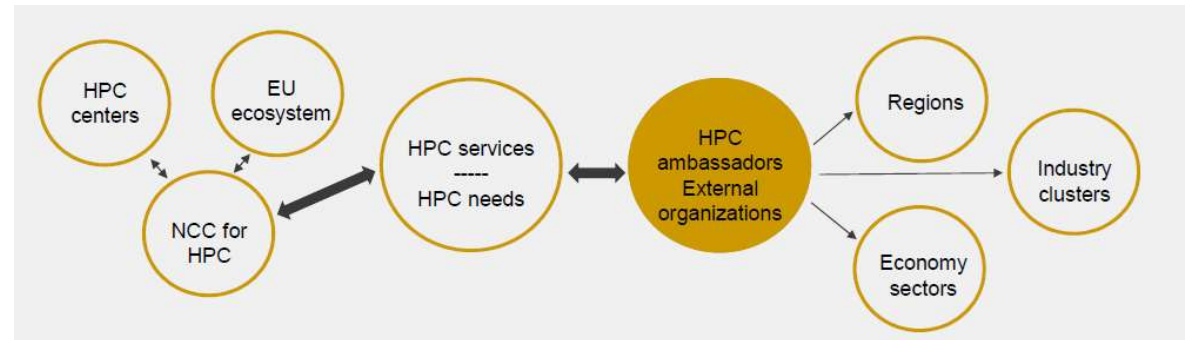
On October 10th, 2024

💡 Open Calls for SME applications to HPC services

- 50.000 SBU's (contribution in-kind) ~390 compute hours
- Up to 1TB or 2 TB storage account
- Up to 8h HPC/AI consultancy
- Access to trainings: HPC, AI and more
- Invitation to present at NL/EU events
- Invitation to conferences/knowledge sharing events

NCC Netherlands

💡 HPC Ambassadors



NCC Slovakia

Do's

Advertising the Open Call

- **CLARITY** in the offering is **KEY!**
- Sharing in groups directly with a promo message, does not convert, instead asking a different question like: **“Any founder here working on any (Large) AI model / GPTs/ LLMs or working with simulations on large datasets ? There is a new EU initiative offering some perks for startups at no cost to boost the innovation space. Anyone aware of it?”**
- Approach personally, with DMs first, then ask for email address and share first information with 2-pager. Follow-up/phone call immediately to confirm email has been well received
- Build relationships, build communities around topics that are not necessarily related to HPC, work together with community builders (see Meetup: AI/Data Science/etc.)

First contact

- Use a standard script/email to reply to Open Call applications
- Use automated booking link for the intake meeting and other calls
- Keep a 30 min meeting short and to the point.
Be in the lead. Confirm. Expectations. Next steps.

"Running Open Calls"

The screenshot displays the SURF Bookings interface. The main heading is "Meeting with EuroCC Netherlands (SURF)". Below this, there are options for "N1 service" and "Online Meeting", along with "Edit service" and "Book appointment" buttons. The interface is divided into sections: "Overview", "Service details", "Calendar and Availability", and "Staff". The "Overview" section shows a list of upcoming appointments:

Date	Time	Meeting Name
09 Oct	11:30 - 12:00	Meeting with EuroCC Nethe...
21 Oct	11:30 - 14:00	Meeting with EuroCC Nethe...

There is also a "Show all" link and a "Show calendar" button at the bottom.

Do's

Follow-up after first meeting

- Check for consistency in answers: form vs. intake meeting vs. email after
- Do your due diligence on the company
- A Grant Proposal 2-pager document is sent within 1-2 days after the intake. Re-iterate in the email what the 2-pager doc is about, mainly about the expectation of public dissemination and ask for an acknowledgement/ agreement to it in a reply to the email
- Meetings in person make it easier to get clarity on the use case but also to build trust
- Emailing with meeting notes and what has been agreed on after each meeting

"Running Open Calls"

Thank you for applying to the EuroCC open call for HPC support for SME's.

As an SME enrolled in the EuroCC Netherlands program, The Ocean Cleanup Technologies will be able to receive the following at no cost:

- up to 8h HPC/AI consultancy
- 50.000 SBU's (app. 390 GPU hours) : compute available until app. 1st October 2025.
- up to 2TB storage on Snellius

Please find attached the Proof-of-concept proposal and more information about expectations as listed below:

- **The Ocean Cleanup Technologies agrees to share** any high-level outcome of the project in one of any format possible (presentation, whitepaper, blog, video, invitation to our online/in person events etc.)
- **The Ocean Cleanup Technologies agrees to mention EuroCC Netherlands x SURF** for the (part of the) project granted with HPC resources in any promotional/marketing/ dissemination materials.

As a series of next steps, we would like to invite you to the following:

- **book** the onboarding online call [link](#).
- **register** (your/your colleagues) for the **Introduction to Supercomputing training** hosted online by SURF via Microsoft Teams on **8th of October 2024 at this link**. During the online training you will get a hands-on experience on **Snellius** and a **training user account that will be valid for 2 weeks after the day of the trainings**. **Snellius** is the National Supercomputer hosted at SURF and you can find more information about the system publicly at this link: <https://servicedesk.surf.nl/wiki/Disolav/WIKI/Snellius>.
- **reply** to this email if you agree with the proposal as described in the **EuroCC HPC Grant_TheOceanCleanup.pdf** attached to this email. **Please include the email addresses and full names of the colleagues who would be working on the application so we could get the login accounts generated right away.**

We are looking forward to your reply and to seeing you at the online meeting/training soon. Do not hesitate to reach out to us for any other questions you may have.

About EuroCC Netherlands

EuroCC (European Competence Center) is the European network of 33 NCCs (National Competence Centers) national HPC competence centers with the aim of bridging the existing HPC skills gaps and infrastructure while promoting cooperation across Europe.

EuroCC Netherlands has the mission to facilitate the knowledge sharing and access to HPC infrastructure in the topics of HPC, HPC/AI and AI among all interested national and EU organizations : research institutes, SMEs, big industries, public administration and society in general. The HPC/AI consultancy hours offered to our applicants fall under the State Aid Regulation and it comes at no monetary costs for the applicants to the regular HPC access. More information [here](#)

SURF is the national collaborative organization of all knowledge institutions in The Netherlands and is the national coordinator for the EuroCC Netherlands. More info [here](#)

Kind regards,
Andrea Moga

Do's

“Ambassador Program”

Engage with established networks

- Work with clusters, industry associations, and regional centers that already have strong connections to local businesses.

Leverage regional presence

- Engage local entities to foster closer connections and increase participation.
- Organize events tailored to regional priorities and industries

Enable versatile cooperation formats

- Offer a range of engagement opportunities: webinars, workshops, on-site events, conferences, and publications.

Emphasize regular human interaction

- Schedule regular follow-ups, prioritizing in-person or video meetings over impersonal email communication to build relationship and trust

Organize shorter, impactful events

- Keep events concise (1-2 hours) to maximize attendance and engagement.
- Focus on delivering value in short time frames.

Provide data for strategy development

- Use feedback from surveys and events to guide national and organizational HPC strategies.

Don'ts

"Running Open Calls"

Advertising the Open Call

- Sharing in community groups, especially WhatsApp, self-promo messages is not recommended without agreement **beforehand** with the community organiser/lead
- Dutch Startup Association Lead found it **hard to believe we do things for free** and did not grasp why we are doing this

First contact

- Delay in onboarding: SMEs with sensitive data/proprietary data asking for DPAs (Data Processing Agreement)
- ❖ Work-around and intervention: Use open-source data set
- Do not fall for big jargon!

Follow-up after first meeting

- React quickly in case of lack of clarity and focus for the Proof of Concept:
 - Ex: One SME listing 3-4 use-cases but lacking focus. 3-4 meetings so far. HPC account activated, but not consumed. Used all HPC/Quantum consultancy hours. Now redirecting to an external partner : paid development services of applications.

Don'ts

“Ambassador Program”

Avoid over-technical explanations

- Presenting too many technical details can alienate SMEs without strong IT backgrounds.
- Focus on outcomes and benefits.

Don't assume familiarity with HPC

- Many businesses may have heard of HPC but do not understand its relevance to them. Simplify the explanation.

Don't overlook the importance of training

- Offering just HPC access without adequate training and ongoing support can lead to poor outcomes.
- Ensure that SMEs are provided with necessary skills.

Avoid one-size-fits-all approaches

- Do not stick to just one format or style of interaction. Adapt to the needs of each audience (e.g., industry leaders may prefer different formats than academia).

Don't underestimate barriers

- Some SMEs face significant financial and knowledge-related barriers. Be ready to address these through funding guidance or simplified entry points.

Don't ignore non-tech sectors

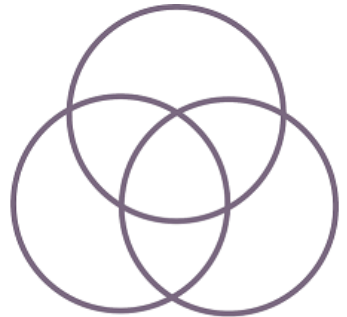
- While HPC is traditionally seen in tech-heavy sectors, non-tech industries also have significant potential (e.g., retail, logistics, healthcare).

Lessons Learned

"Running Open Calls"

Case by case

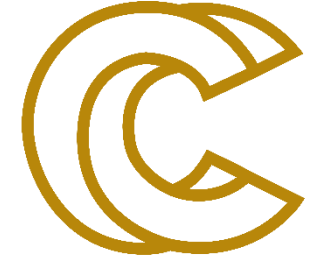
- **People value what they pay for. People don't value what is free!**
- Public dissemination requests are not easily accepted
- Being assertive and reminding repetitively works to get answers
- Start-up founders are extremely busy people. **Some founders are very focused, some are not.**
- Lack of developers in-house can make or break the collaboration.
- Be reasonably careful/defiant: once, the information filled in the open call looked promising, until we had the intake call and suspected it is an AI Bot (no video, delays in answering, too good to be true)!



CASTIEL 2



EURO²



EURO^{4SEE}



EuroHPC
Joint Undertaking

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