

The [GEO-Microsoft Planetary Computer Programme](#) invites the GEO community to be among the early adopters of Microsoft's [Planetary Computer](#). This is a multi-petabyte catalog of global environmental data with intuitive Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), to take advantage of open data and analytical tools, and to help shape the development of the platform in its early stages. Please find answers to some frequently asked questions below:

1. In the eligibility section for the GEO-Microsoft Planetary Computer Programme, the following is written: "Applicants must be associated with research institutions from GEO Members and/or Participating Organizations".

Does this mean that as long as we are working at a research institution within a GEO Member country, we are eligible to apply?

Yes, this is correct and applies to GEO Participating Organizations as well. Please see the links below :

[GEO Member Countries](#)

[GEO Participating Organizations](#)

2. Would you mind clarifying what the term 'associated' implies in terms of eligibility ?

The term 'associated' used in the eligibility section simply means that there should be some demonstrable link to a research institution or agency (e.g. as part of a consortium or partner in the project) of the GEO Member.

3. The following is stated in the eligibility description: "Projects should contribute to and be endorsed by the leadership of the Flagship Initiative or Community Activity of the GEO Work Programme (GWP) on whose behalf the proposal is submitted." As long as our proposal is in-line with the GWP and its objectives, do we fulfill this requirement? Or is an endorsement letter needed?

You will need to contact the leadership of the GWP activity you are interested in contributing to, and obtain a letter of endorsement from them. It can be very simple, just an acknowledgement that your project will support the activity, and how.

[GEO Working Groups](#)

[GEO 2020-2022 Work Programme](#)

4. From the perspective of GEO Work Programme activity leadership, is there any particular limit on the number of submissions from/associated with a given GEO Work Programme

activity? For instance, if we receive multiple expressions of interest, is it obligatory that we select only one?

There are no restrictions on the number of submissions associated with a given GWP activity. The only requirement is that you are supportive of the project, having been convinced that it will provide a tangible contribution to the GWP activity.

5. Regarding what is defined as 'deliverables' - does this mean our platform should be proprietary, and we make our algorithms open ?

Project deliverables must be made publicly available: data (including in situ, marine, and spaceborne) as per the GEOSS Data Sharing Principles and all code should be open source (including scripts and software).

6. Regarding the clause that states components of the product developed should be made openly available, how much flexibility is there with respect to use of a proprietary platform around which the product may be built?

It is understood the platform itself may be proprietary, but everything else built around it, as well as data sets used, should be open source. This means the broader GEO community can also use the products delivered at the conclusion of the programme.

7. Would it be possible to receive clarification regarding the submission timeline. It states that the initial draft can be submitted anytime up until 15 June 2021. Are we able to receive feedback before the final proposal submission date of 25 June 2021? I would assume the draft submitted for the 15th of June should be close to the final version.

Yes, the version submitted to the Senior Scientist on the 15 June 2021 should be close to the final version. The 10-day period between submission dates is given to allow the leadership of the individual GWP activity (to which you wish to contribute) the time to digest the proposal and iterate with you in case modifications are needed. The final proposal version must be submitted by 25 June.

8. Concerning the budget: If I understood correctly, we can request up to US\$ 60,000 for salaries of the team members? How detailed does this need to be broken down, i.e. is it sufficient saying team member 1 needs x for 50% employment over 12 months and team member 2 needs y for 20% employment over 12 months? Or are there other requirements? Could other costs (i.e. conference fees plus travel) also be requested?

There are no restrictions on how the funds are allocated, only that they are itemized and justified in the budget.

9. Concerning the budget: We can request additional support for Azure costs broken down by service? Making this selection ahead of time is a bit difficult, as it is sometimes challenging to know what is needed beforehand. Can you advise me how to best approach this? Also, how should the budget be presented in the proposal?

To calculate the anticipated costs associated with the Azure computing environment, please consult the [Azure calculator](#), and include this estimation in the estimated budget as a separate table.

10. Are there any specific requirements concerning the experience of the PI? Should this person be a senior scientist, or for example can they be a junior researcher?

There are no restrictions; however, since this is a competitive call, proposals with more senior level participants may have an advantage.

11. Is more than one Principal Investigator allowed to participate in the proposal?

Yes, as long as the additional PI meets the eligibility requirements and you have agreed to the division of resources and labour.

12. Are the "Additional datasets" (e.g., Sentinel-1, NASADEM, etc.) of the Planetary Computer Data Catalog accessible for use in project proposals?

Short answer: yes. The difference between "primary" datasets and the "additional" datasets is that "additional datasets" are not yet queryable through the STAC API, but they will be relatively soon, and for all of them, there are recommended ways around that (using external querying services).