

Minimum Requirements for a Project Charter

Module 2: Value Proposition

Topic 3: Questions 2 & 3 - Stakeholders & Differentiation



The Charter asks you to identify who gains value from your Node's existence.

NOT: A generic list of everyone (researchers, funders, policymakers...)

But: Specific stakeholder groups who gain distinctive value from your Node

Stakeholder Analysis Framework

Not all stakeholders are equal. Strategic analysis requires assessing:

- **Power:** Can they influence your Node's success?
- **Legitimacy:** Do they have a valid claim to benefit?
- **Urgency:** How critical is their need?

Q

"Should mission statements reference all stakeholder groups or emphasise a few key differentiators?"

A

Be selective. Mention stakeholders where you create distinctive value, not everyone.

Five Stakeholder Categories for EOSC Nodes

1. Research Communities (Primary Users)

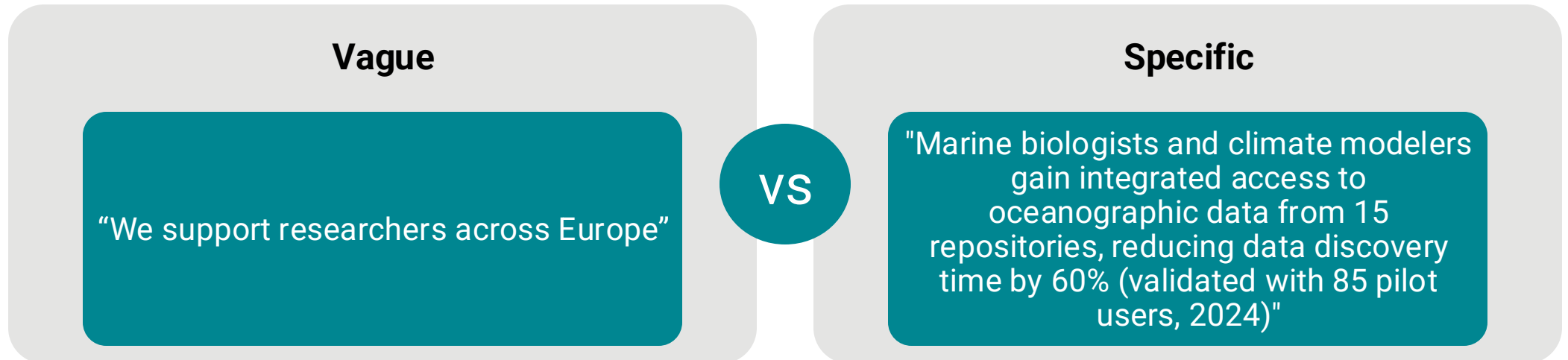
Who they are:

- Specific disciplines or research domains
- Cross-disciplinary researchers
- Early-career vs. established researchers

What to specify:

- **Which** research communities (not "all researchers")
- **What problem** you solve for them
- **What outcome** they achieve
- **Evidence** of benefit (usage, testimonials, metrics)

Example:



Five Stakeholder Categories for EOSC Nodes

2. EOSC Federation (Ecosystem)

What to specify:

- **What gap** do you fill in Federation coverage?
- **How** do you strengthen interoperability?
- **What** can other Nodes learn/adopt from you?

Example:

"EOSC Federation gains comprehensive marine data infrastructure for Central Europe (geographic gap) and reusable ISO 19115 metadata standards that other environmental science Nodes can adapt (ecosystem strengthening)"

Five Stakeholder Categories for EOSC Nodes

3. Service Providers (Contributors)

Who they are:

- Third-party organisations onboarding to your Node
- Research infrastructures contributing services
- Data repositories integrating with Federation

What to specify:

- **Why** would they join your Node vs. another?
- **What support** do you provide?
- **Evidence** of partnerships

Example:

"Oceanographic data providers access curated research communities of 420 active users, increasing data deposit rates from 23% baseline to 65% (pilot results), while receiving technical support for FAIR metadata compliance"

Five Stakeholder Categories for EOSC Nodes

4. Institutional Stakeholders (Enablers)

Who they are:

- Your host institution(s)
- National funders or ministries
- Research councils

What to specify:

- **What strategic value** do they gain?
- **Why** do they support your Node?
- **Evidence** of commitment

Example:

"Host institutions gain recognised leadership in European marine data infrastructure, influencing EU marine policy development. National funders benefit from €380k investment visibility across 12-country research network."

Five Stakeholder Categories for EOSC Nodes

5. Policy Actors (Context Shapers)

Who they are:

- European Commission
- National governments
- Science policy organisations

What to specify:

- **Which EOSC objectives** does your Node advance?
- **How** does this align with policy priorities?

Example:

"Advances EC data sovereignty priorities by providing European-hosted marine data infrastructure, reducing researcher dependence on non-EU platforms"

Stakeholder Prioritisation

Not all stakeholders belong in your one-page Charter Section 2.

Prioritise stakeholders who:

- Gain **significant, measurable** value from your Node
- Provide **critical support** (funding, users, legitimacy)
- Represent value **other Nodes don't provide**

Typically: Focus on 2-3 stakeholder groups maximum in Section 2

Charter Question 3: What Makes You Different?

The Charter explicitly asks for differentiation across four dimensions:

Geographic

Regional/
national
coverage

Thematic

Disciplinary/
domain focus

Technical

Infrastructure
capabilities

Community

User group
relationships

You don't need differentiation on ALL four dimensions.

Focus on your 1-2 strongest where you have clear, verifiable distinction from other Nodes.

Organisations differentiate by positioning in different "strategic groups" - clusters of organisations competing on similar bases.

Understanding the Four Differentiation Dimensions

Geographic Differentiation

Regional/
national
coverage

When to emphasise:

- You're the only or primary Node serving a specific region/country
- You have unique cross-border agreements in your region
- You fill a geographic gap in Federation coverage

Example:

"Only Node providing comprehensive AAI infrastructure for Dutch research institutions, enabling seamless access to European services for 50,000 researchers across 14 universities"

Q

"Could another Node easily serve this region?"

A

- If no: Strong geographic differentiation
 - If yes: Not your differentiator

Understanding the Four Differentiation Dimensions

Thematic Differentiation

Disciplinary/
domain focus

Example:

"20-year established expertise in oceanographic metadata (ISO 19115); only Node providing comprehensive marine science data infrastructure, validated through partnerships with 15 European marine research institutes"

When to emphasise:

- You have deep domain/discipline expertise few others have
- You serve a research community underrepresented in EOSC
- You've built specialised tools/standards for your domain

Q

"Do other Nodes serve this discipline as comprehensively?"

A

- If no: Strong thematic differentiation
 - If yes: Not your differentiator

Understanding the Four Differentiation Dimensions

Technical Differentiation

Infrastructure capabilities

Example:

"National quantum computing access integrated with HPC infrastructure; only EOSC Node providing quantum algorithm development environment for European researchers"

When to emphasise:

- You have specialised infrastructure others lack
- You have developed novel technical solutions
- You provide unique technical capabilities

Q

"Can other Nodes access/provide this technology?"

A

- If no: Strong technical differentiation
 - If yes: Not your differentiator

Understanding the Four Differentiation Dimensions



When to emphasise:

- You have unique trust/relationships with user groups
- You serve communities with special requirements (e.g., sensitive data)
- You have built user community others can't access

Example:

"Established legal frameworks with 8 national health data custodians; only Node enabling cross-border clinical data access with full GDPR compliance, trusted by ethics boards and health agencies"

Q

"Can other Nodes build these relationships quickly?"

A

- If no: Strong community differentiation
 - If yes: Not your differentiator

Combining Dimensions for Stronger Positioning

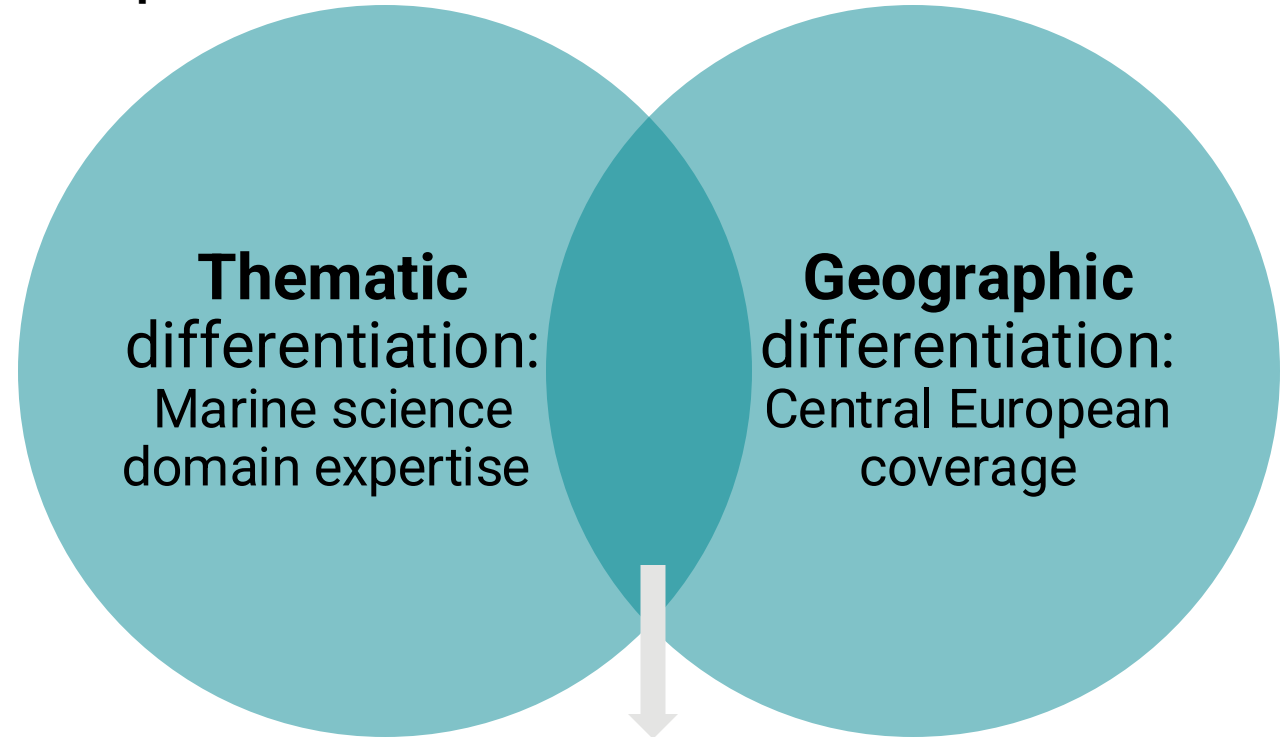
"To avoid vagueness of the generic, mission statements should combine specific elements for stronger positioning."

Why this is stronger than single dimension:

- Thematic alone: Other marine Nodes might exist elsewhere
- Geographic alone: Other Central European Nodes might exist in different domains
- Combined: Intersection is unique

Most compelling differentiation combines dimensions:

Example: Marine Science Node



"Only Node combining deep marine science expertise with comprehensive Central European regional infrastructure"

Use Strategic Positioning Canvas Parts 4 and 5 for this exercise.

Part 1: Stakeholder Benefit Mapping (Canvas Part 4)

Stakeholder Prioritization

High Priority (include in Charter):

- Stakeholders who gain significant, measurable value
- Stakeholders who provide critical support
- Value that other Nodes don't provide

Lower Priority (may omit):

- Generic benefits anyone could claim
- Weak or aspirational connections
- Stakeholders with unclear value proposition

For each stakeholder group (2-3 maximum), complete:

Stakeholder:

Specific benefit they gain:

Evidence this benefit is real:

How this strengthens EOOSC ecosystem (beyond individual benefit):

Use Strategic Positioning Canvas Parts 4 and 5 for this exercise.

Part 2: Differentiation Analysis (Canvas Part 5)

Identify your 1-2 strongest differentiation dimensions:

Dimension Assessment

Dimension	Your Distinction	Evidence	Strong or Weak
Geographic			
Thematic			
Technical			
Community			

Synthesis: Draft Your Statements

Stakeholder Benefits Statement (for Charter Question 2):

Differentiation Statement (for Charter Question 3):

These answer:

Question 2: "Which stakeholder groups benefit from your Node's existence?"

Question 3: "What makes you different from other Nodes?"

Thank you!