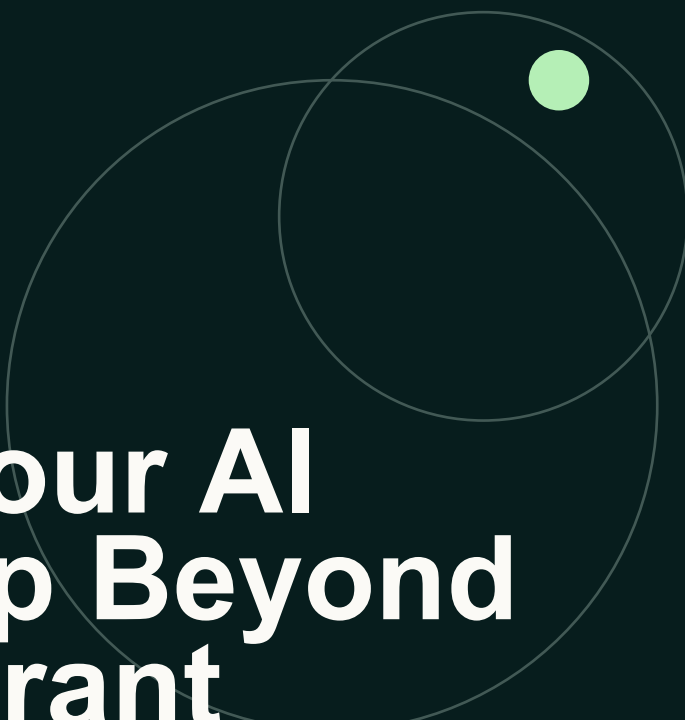


THE AI INSTITUTE / OPERATING INTELLIGENCE

INFLUENCE AND PARTNERSHIP RADAR · 09 OCT / 2026



Cost Your AI Partnership Beyond the Grant

New science awards and supplier credits widen the opportunity. Agree who funds the work when that support ends.

Boards, C-suite and senior management

Research period: October 2026 – October 2026

First published: 9 October 2026

Current to 9 October 2026

PUBLICATION RECORD

An Institute thesis and decision framework

An AI partnership is financially credible when the institution can explain what support covers, what useful work it enables and who pays for continuing operations. Time-limited credits can fund discovery without funding a sustainable service.

WHAT LEADERS SHOULD TAKE FROM THIS PAPER

- 01
- Separate cash awards from service credits and wider investment commitments.
- 02
- Cost staff, integration and verification alongside model access.
- 03
- Check eligibility and publication conditions for the specific programme.
- 04
- Agree the continuation budget before subsidised work becomes essential.

Research method

Original Institute synthesis of 8 October official science-award and supplier announcements, EuroHPC access guidance, a regional institutional initiative and a new scientific-agent preprint. Budget and governance recommendations are Institute analysis, not measured partnership returns. No private anecdotes or source wording are reproduced.

First published 9 October 2026 · Updated 9 October 2026 · Research period October 2026 – October 2026 · Version 1.0 · Suggested citation: The AI Institute, *Cost Your AI Partnership Beyond the Grant* (2026).

CONTENTS

Inside this paper

01

The award is the beginning of the budget
Leadership & Influence

02

Read the offers separately
What changed

03

Price the work that the offer leaves out
The operating decision

04

Put the operating team in the room
Whose evidence matters

05

The method travels; access does not
Where the terms change

06

Approve the transition, not just the launch
This week’s action

M

Method and limitations

R

References

How to use this brief

Start with the decision and use the framework to challenge the current plan. Figures retain their original populations and definitions. Institute analysis is labelled, and limitations are recorded before the references.

The award is the beginning of the budget

An AI partnership can look inexpensive while the difficult costs sit outside the offer. Model access may be covered; the people preparing data, connecting systems and checking results still need funding. Leaders should welcome useful support without treating its headline value as the cost of a functioning programme.

The decision is whether the proposed work has a credible life during and after the support period. Before accepting, name a budget owner and identify the useful output the institution expects to retain. A pilot that should end after answering a research question is perfectly legitimate. An essential service that quietly loses its funding is a different proposition.

Read the offers separately

On 8 October, the US Department of Energy announced twelve Phase II Genesis Mission project awards totalling \$159 million, alongside six additional Phase I projects. These are research awards, not evidence that the proposed scientific outcomes have already been achieved.¹

Supplier announcements use different measures. Anthropic committed \$150 million over three years in Claude product and API credits, with training and technical support. Crusoe pledged \$50 million in compute credits over three years. NVIDIA described commitments valued at \$1 billion over five years across science-related initiatives. Their scope and beneficiaries differ; these figures should not be added into one cash fund.²³⁴

The executive opportunity is real: support may make work affordable that an institution could not otherwise attempt. The missing evidence is equally important. Announcements do not show every recipient's final terms, usable allocation, operating costs or results. Those details determine whether a partnership is valuable to a particular institution.

Price the work that the offer leaves out

Ask the research or business lead to describe one useful output and the work required to produce it. Then separate what the partner pays for from what the institution supplies. Include data preparation, system connections, staff time, security review and independent checking. A large allocation of credits has limited practical value if the team cannot use it before expiry.

Value credits against the eligible services the project genuinely needs, under the applicable terms. Their face value is not automatically equivalent to cash saved. Check service availability, expiry, usage limits and whether technical support is included. Do not assume that an announcement’s three-year commitment gives every project three years of access.

Keep experimentation and continuing operations in different budget lines. The first buys an answer to an uncertain question. The second pays for repeated use, maintenance and accountable decisions. Set a review before the subsidy ends: continue with an identified budget, narrow the work or close it with the findings documented.

EXHIBIT / THREE NUMBERS THE INSTITUTION NEEDS

01 Covered work Eligible services and support the project can actually use. Institute partnership assessment	02 Institutional cost People, integration and verification outside the offer. Institute partnership assessment	03 Continuation cost The funded operating plan after temporary support ends. Institute partnership assessment
--	--	---

Put the operating team in the room

A sponsor can explain the offer. The project team can explain the scientific or commercial question. Neither alone establishes the continuing cost. Include the finance owner, technical support team and people responsible for validating outputs. Ask each to identify a condition under which the institution should stop.

Fresh research reinforces the need to budget for checking, without proving a return. Station, a new scientific-agent preprint, tests research activity on three tasks derived from earlier papers and two further open-ended tasks. Its controlled results are not a real-world discovery rate. The practical inference is to fund independent assessment of results rather than assume model access buys verified science.⁵

Useful mutual value is possible: researchers gain access and support; providers learn which tools work under demanding conditions. Keep that exchange explicit. Agree what the institution may publish about methods, limitations and costs, and disclose material support. A partnership announcement should not substitute for an account of what was learned.

The method travels; access does not

The US announcements concern specified science programmes and beneficiaries. They are not a general entitlement for institutions elsewhere. A global organisation should identify the eligible entity and project before treating an offer as available across its operations.

EuroHPC provides a different access model. Its official FAQ describes access as currently free, subject to the relevant call and allocation process. Open-science access carries dissemination and reporting expectations, while support arrangements distinguish basic assistance from more advanced application work. Check the specific call's eligibility and conditions; free machine time does not remove the institution's staffing needs. ⁶

A Europe–Latin America high-performance-computing and AI network announced in September addresses fragmented infrastructure, uneven access, investment and skills. It offers a partnership direction, not proof that every participating country or institution already has usable capacity. Connectivity and local expertise remain part of the project decision. ⁷

This review has not established comparable current programme terms or outcomes across Africa, the Middle East or Asia-Pacific. Do not infer them from US or European offers. Ask locally about permitted data use, service availability, language support and institutional capacity, then cost the actual arrangement.

Approve the transition, not just the launch

Take one live partnership proposal to a joint review by its project sponsor and finance owner. Require a short account of eligible support, institutional contributions and the decision at expiry. For uncertain research, a planned stop can be the right outcome; continuation should depend on useful results and an affordable operating plan.

The strongest partnership is not necessarily the one with the largest announced contribution. It is the one whose terms let the institution do worthwhile work, assess it honestly and make a deliberate decision about what comes next.

RESEARCH RECORD

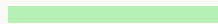
Method and limitations

Method

Original Institute synthesis of 8 October official science-award and supplier announcements, EuroHPC access guidance, a regional institutional initiative and a new scientific-agent preprint. Budget and governance recommendations are Institute analysis, not measured partnership returns. No private anecdotes or source wording are reproduced.

Limitations

Announced commitments are not verified disbursements or outcomes. Credits, grants and wider investment commitments have different scope and cannot be combined as cash funding. Individual award and access terms require confirmation. Regional coverage is incomplete. Station is a preprint with a small controlled task set, not peer-reviewed evidence of deployed scientific productivity.



Sources and limitations

Source facts link to the original publication. Institute analysis reconciles definitions and turns the material into a management proposition. Frameworks are decision aids, not claims of universal causality. Read every important statistic with its population, date, definition and caveat.

Research cutoff: 9 October 2026. Review cycle: six months, or earlier after a material change in the underlying facts, standards or policy.

REFERENCES

Evidence behind the thesis

01	US Department of Energy: New Genesis Mission awards 8 October 2026. Twelve Phase II awards totalling \$159 million and six additional Phase I projects; announcement, not completed outcomes.
02	Anthropic: Genesis Mission commitment 8 October 2026. Three-year product/API-credit commitment with support; provider account, not recipient-level delivery evidence.
03	Crusoe: \$50 million compute pledge 8 October 2026. Compute credits over three years; individual project terms and use not verified.
04	NVIDIA: US science commitments 8 October 2026. Commitments valued at \$1 billion over five years; not equivalent to the DOE award pool or unrestricted cash.
05	Du and Chung: Station v1 submitted 6 October 2026; included in 8 October arXiv release. Preprint; three paper-derived tasks and two further open-ended tasks, not real-world discovery-rate evidence.
06	EuroHPC: Access policy and FAQ Current official guidance checked 9 October 2026. Eligibility depends on specific call and system; do not generalise older funding-programme provisions.
07	EuroHPC: Europe and Latin America strengthen digital ties Published 23 September 2026 about the 22 September CARLA event in Córdoba, Argentina. Network initiative, not a completed regional access programme.

THE AI INSTITUTE

Make the decision.
Then measure what changes.

Research · Readiness · Capability

theai.institute