

How Iceland is making equipment visible, searchable, and bookable nationwide

ORGANISATION



Science Park
University of Iceland

CUSTOMER

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SWITCHED FROM

OpenIRIS pilot

From fragmented access to a national mandate

In 2021, the Icelandic government launched the Icelandic Roadmap for Research Infrastructures (Vegvísir) initiative, an ambitious plan to make all publicly funded research equipment visible and accessible to other institutions and companies. The aim was to improve capital efficiency and enable start-ups and SMEs to access advanced tools, and to ensure better use of public funds and greater research output.

“The Icelandic government co-funds or fully funds a lot of research equipment. But before this new initiative, there wasn’t really any requirement that institutions make their equipment accessible to others,” explained Gísli Karl Gíslason, Project Manager at the University of Iceland Science Park.

The University of Iceland was selected to lead the project, with its Science Park, a non-profit entity owned by the university, tasked with implementation. Their mandate: build a national platform to make equipment visible, searchable, and bookable across the country.

The Challenge at a Glance

Hundreds of organisations that have equipment, or want access to it



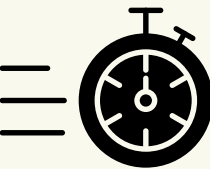
Thousands of users working across those organisations



No existing system that can handle the scale of this challenge



Requirement for quick rollout with minimal training



“We get an extremely granular view of how every piece of equipment is being used down to the exact minute.”
Gísli Karl Gíslason

Calira was chosen for three main reasons:

Equipment visibility

Calira is extremely good at making equipment visible and searchable across different departments and organisations.

Proven adoption

Already in use at other similar institutions like:
Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard, MIT and Stanford.

User onboarding and accessibility

“It’s very easy to make a booking: you just click on the equipment, you select the time you need, and then it’s booked.”

According to Gísli, “The biggest benefit so far has been the amount of detail you can add to equipment, and the ease of use of the software. Minimum training is required for lab admins, and none at all for users.”

The rollout has begun with publicly funded labs, including:

- **Biomedical Center (BMC), University of Iceland:** managing microscopy and imaging facilities used for teaching, research, and hospital collaboration. Bookings and maintenance are now centralised.
- **IceTec incubator:** an independent hub for engineering start-ups, with equipment such as fabricators, X-ray machines, and laser microscopes. Calira helps manage bookings, tenant access, and project-based billing

“We were really surprised, and many of our users were actually very impressed with all the lab management aspects outside of bookings: maintenance lists, training manuals, projects, maintenance contracts, and access groups.”

Plans to scale up within the next five years

The rollout is happening gradually, building by building and room by room. The goal is to scale from today's 1,000 users up to the entire research community in Iceland with a user count exceeding 2,000 users.

Long-term, Iceland plans to use data from Calira to enable national-level decision-making. “In three to five years time, if the government wanted to say, okay, “how much are we utilising equipment for life science related projects or health projects,” they could just pull that data out from Calira and see: here is an exact breakdown of the bookings, the amount of time they took and the total cost to use it, plus the maintenance log for the equipment.”

Why it matters

By implementing Calira at a national scale, Iceland is creating one of the world's first countrywide lab booking systems. The initiative reduces duplication, increases equipment uptime, and gives startups and SMEs access to world-class instruments, nationwide.

Could Calira help your organisation?

If your team is juggling spreadsheets, struggling with equipment visibility, or simply tired of scheduling headaches, Calira might be the quiet fix you've been looking for. Let's talk about how we can help your lab run more smoothly, with less admin and more clarity.

What's changing on the ground

1. Equipment scheduling and conflict reduction

Equipment is now booked in Calira instead of via emails, Teams, or spreadsheets. This has reduced double-bookings and improved fairness of access.

2. Equipment management and improved visibility

Institutions now maintain a live inventory of equipment, visible across organisations. “Intention of using Calira was purely just to maintain a list of equipment and allow users to easily book. But we were really surprised...users are not going to be using Calira only for booking equipment but also for maintaining a comprehensive overview of the operations of a lab.”

3. Maintenance tracking and downtime prevention

Maintenance schedules and service agreements are tracked in the system. “For our users it's not just access to equipment, it's also the maintenance and the service agreement management part.”

4. Data extraction and CapEx planning

By logging bookings and maintenance data, institutions gain granular insight. “We will get an extremely granular view of how every piece of equipment is being used down to the exact minute,” said Gísli. This data can inform future purchasing decisions and justify new investments.

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calira.co/demo