

**Address by Jón Atli Benediktsson, Rector of the University of Iceland, at the  
opening of the Borealis Data Center's Responsible HPC Conference,  
Kornhlaðan, Bankastræti 2,  
Thursday 19 May 2022, 9 am**

Good morning, everyone. On behalf of the University of Iceland I would like to welcome you all to the Borealis Data Center's Responsible HPC Conference 2022. In particular, I would like to welcome our guests who have travelled from abroad, including Anders Dem Jensen, Head of the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking (JU); Daniel Opalka, EuroHPC JU Program Officer; Bastian Koller, Head of the EuroCC & CASTIEL Project; Lilit Axner, head of NCC for HPC & AI in Sweden and close Nordic collaboration partner; and Bill Patrowicz, CEO of the Reykjavík Institute, whom we are well acquainted with here in Iceland. Finally I would like to welcome all attending company representatives.

Dear guests, HPC and advanced computing are vital for Icelandic industry and recognised as an important driver for innovation and building skillsets and jobs for the next decade.

In academia we have strongly recognized the need for HPC and strengthened the infrastructure in this respect. Additionally, at the University of Iceland there are new permanent academic positions centred around HPC, cloud computing and AI, for example Morris Riedel and Hafsteinn Einarsson at the School of Engineering and Natural Sciences, and we have outstanding new facilities in Gróska, which is the newest building in the University of Iceland Science Park, housing numerous innovative and start-up companies.

HPC is an essential part of the European Digital Innovation Hub of Iceland (EDIH-IS), which unfortunately has no website as yet, but the site is under construction and will hopefully go live this autumn.

Iceland has joined the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking, which demonstrates that the Icelandic government is fully aware of the importance of HPC for the country and supports it. A National Competence Center for HPC & AI is currently being developed in Iceland and the Center of Excellence for HPC & AI is driving progress in AI research. The RAISE Center of Excellence project is supporting strong Icelandic application domains such as remote sensing.

Dear conference guests. My main message to you here today is: "HPC & Data Centers in Iceland – We can do that!" A prime example of this attitude is the company 'Data Centers by Iceland, run jointly with Business Iceland, as well as the Supercomputing 2021 Conference, which was attended by many stakeholders who are already operating green data centers in Iceland. These include the Borealis Data Centres and Bill's Reykjavík Institute, as well as Advania Thor and Verne Global, to name just a few.

Finally, I want to stress that it is essential that Iceland develops the jobs and skillsets required to operate these data centers and use them for scientific, engineering and business applications.

Dear guests, without further ado, I hereby declare the conference open and I hope it is a productive and enjoyable event for you all.

Thank you.