Nextcloud Pilot. SURF will launch a Nextcloud pilot in 2026. Nextcloud is an open-source collaboration platform. A growing number of institutions across all sectors are using Nextcloud. The education sector is exploring alternatives to big tech applications, for example. The University of Amsterdam (UvA) will participate in the SURF Pilot with Nextcloud with at least 100 staff and students from faculties and service departments, both individuals and groups. Learning from the use of alternatives, particularly for the products of major American tech giants, is one of the options for achieving greater digital autonomy.

When and for whom? All SURF institutions, starting in January 2026 and initially running for one year. Approximately 30 institutions will participate, including 12 universities. The UvA is among the first institutions to join the pilot. The environment will be available to administrators in February and to pilot participants in March.

What does the pilot environment offer? File storage, sharing, and editing; chats and online gatherings (meetings, webinars, lectures); contacts, calendars, and productivity apps.
In more detail:
- Files: file storage, sharing, and synchronization. 100 GB for each participant. 2–10 TB for each institution. (see https://nextcloud.com/files/)
- Nextcloud Office based on Collabora; online document editing with real-time collaboration. (see https://nextcloud.com/office/)
- Talk: video conferencing, chat, and voice calls. (see https://nextcloud.com/talk/)
- Groupware: calendar, contacts, and email integration. (Email integration starting in Q2)
- Assistant: privacy-focused AI for summarizing, drafting, and answering questions. (planned for Q2)
- Productivity apps: notes, tasks, project organization, forms, and more.

What does SURF do? Host the environment (each participating institution will have its own Nextcloud environment), provide second-line support, coordinate a special interest group, provide implementation advice, and connect the environment to SURFconext (log in with UvAnetID) and Microsoft applications (mail and calendar in Q2).

What will participating institutions do? Ensure at least 20 staff and/or students use the environment daily, provide first-line support, maintain contact with SURF, participate in the special interest group, provide feedback, and help evaluate the environment.

Organization of the pilot at the UvA. Management tasks in the UvA Nextcloud environment will be performed by the Collaboration team at ICTS. First-line support will be provided by student assistants. Participants will contact UvA support via the Service Desk. We will also organize information to and from UvA participants and conduct an evaluation of the pilot among UvA participants.

What is expected of pilot participants? Using Nextcloud as much as possible for daily work. Providing feedback on experiences and helping to evaluate the implementation of Nextcloud.

What are the costs? SURF requests a contribution from the institutions. We cover these costs for the UvA centrally. Therefore, there are no costs for participants.