



**ASTRONET Board Meeting N°4
13 April 2007
CNRS, 3 rue Michel-Ange, PARIS**

Closed session

Present :

Andersen Johannes (NOTSA) – Chair
Balázs Lajos György (HAS)
Berry Simon (SFTC)
Böhlke Kristina (PT-DESY/ BMBF)
Casoli Fabienne (CNRS/INSU)
Fletcher Peter (STFC)
Fontana Adriano (INAF)
Gallego Jesús (MEC)
Karlsson Finn (VR)
Kessler Martin (ESA)
Kohler Elisabeth (CNRS/INSU)
Hameury Jean-Marie (CNRS/INSU)
Leedjävrv Laurits (ESF- Tartu Observatory)
Melnick Jorge (ESO)
Monnet Guy (ESO)
Nordström Birgitta (NOTSA/CPA)
Perna Corrado (INAF)
Romeo Olivier (CNRS/ INSU)
Stark Ronald (NWO)
Steinacher Martin (SER)
Tautvaisiene Grazina (ITPA VU/LAS)
Vettolani Giampaolo (INAF)
Zickgraf Franz-Josef (PT-DESY)

Apologies:

Krückeberg Stefan (DFG)
Zensus Anton (MPG/MPIfR Bonn)
Laskarides Paul (Greek National Committee for Astronomy)

Minutes

The agenda is adopted by the participants.

Approval of Poland as new contractor

The negotiations are still proceeding, and no decision can be taken at this moment. The approval of a new contractor will require a unanimous vote by the Board.

Approval of any further Associates

Discussions are going on with further Associates (Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, and Slovenia).

Approval of work plan and budget for the next pre-financing period

The activity and the financial report have to be sent to the EC before April 15th but some documents are still missing. Comments on the periodic activity report must be sent to the PMO by April 20.

Since the periodic report has not been transmitted to the EC, it is not possible at this time to know the exact financing that we shall receive for the second reporting period (18months). In addition, the EC funding might be delayed for this reason. An update of the budget for the next financing period will be proposed by the PMO when the financial information for the 1st period has been received for all participants and the question of Poland is clarified.

The major item for the next financing period is the Roadmap Symposium. A number of grants will be reserved for inviting representatives of all European countries as it was done for the Science Vision Symposium.

The review of the Description of Work (D12) will be submitted in May/June for Board approval, taking into account the likely integration of Poland as a new contractor.

WPI.1 Management report

The report on Management of European astronomy (D6), in final factual form, but subject to a final polish of language, will be sent to the Board for approval by the end of April.

WPI.3 Links with I3, DS and astroparticle physics

The Board approves the change of responsibility for the task 1.3 from STFC to CNRS-INSU who will prepare the “Second report on networking activities and discussions with EC-funded initiatives” (D15) in September.

WP2.2 Science vision report

The factually final version will be sent to the Board by the end of April, before the final editing by a science writer.

ESO will make a proposal for the most appropriate location and organisation of an official release of the Science Vision report. This will take place during the first week of June. ASTRONET partners are invited to organise parallel events in their own country.

WP3.1 Approval of updated schedule and draft panels

The updated schedule and panel membership have been approved, including the addition of J. Clavel (ESA) as Member-at-Large of the Working Group and the appointment of P. Caraveo (INAF) as Co-Chair of panel A. The task leader may make small changes in case some people decline to serve as panel members. The final list will be transmitted to the Board. Any proposal for changes should be addressed to the task leader.

The dates and the venue of the Roadmap Symposium are approved by the Board. It will be held on June 16-19, in Liverpool. The PMO is waiting for an estimate of the budget and will check if it fits within the expected limit.

WP 4.1 The Report on the status quo of research processing and funding (D13) and Report on formal, legal and administrative barriers that may hinder European wide cooperation in Astronomy and Astrophysics (D14)

Both drafts have been sent to the Board for information. Comments have to be given in the next few weeks. The final reports will be ready by July 1st, and approved by email.

WP 4.3 Preparation and schedule of the test implementation of a coordinated European research programme

The Board is asked to approve the timeline and to launch the joint call on Jan 1st, 2008.

NOTSA, ESO, ESA, DFG, and MPG will not participate to the call

INAF, CNRS-INSU, MEC, HAS, LAS, STFC, NWO, and perhaps VR and SER express their interest in participating to a common call. STFC needs to first ask their Senior committee; the Swedish Research Council (VR) could give an answer in September.

The Estonian Science Foundation will investigate the possibility to participate.

The DFG and the Greek National Committee for Astronomy were not represented at the meeting.

NWO had proposed a list of possible topics for the joint call, extracted from the Science Vision, including “laboratory astrophysics” in connection with new large infrastructures

(Herschel, ALMA...). For INAF and PT-DESY, laboratory astrophysics is not in their field. Further discussion about the possible themes is thus needed; NWO will lead it. The added value of joining a common call should be made clear.

The decision on timeline, decision making mechanism, and the proposed Memorandum of Understanding will be taken by the participating agencies; the Board requests brief progress reports in July and September.

*WPI.4 Proposed evolutions for Astronet
(see powerpoint presentation)*

The participants discussed about the future of Astronet. The final structure chosen will depend on the key goals adopted for the future. While these remain to be defined in precise terms, the consensus was that the long-term strategic effort is the core mission of ASTRONET. Several possible forms of future organisation were presented.

To investigate this, a working group was set up, composed of L. Balasz, J-M. Hameury, L. Vigroux, R. Stark, F-J Zickgraf, S. Berry, to prepare a report on the essential functions of ASTRONET for the next Board meeting, with several intermediate consultations with the Board, e.g. in September and December. Another working group was appointed to define a list of essential factual data that will be needed in the future work of ASTRONET, and which can be obtained in practice from all European countries (A. Fontana, M. Bode, L. Vigroux, J-M. Hameury, J. Andersen).

Other points

The Coordinator will discuss with the Board before September the election of the Board Chair for the 3rd ASTRONET year.

The next Board meeting will be held in Paris on February 28th, 2008.