

ASTRONET Board meeting on 28 April 2017

Faculty Club, Leuven, Belgium

Conny AERTS (BE), Sofia FELTZING (EAS), Laszlo KISS (HU), Mark McCAUGHREAN (ESA), Denis MOURARD (General Secretary), Guy PERRIN (FR), Catarina SAHLBERG (SE), Ronald STARK (chair, NL), Luca VALENZIANO (IT), Paolo VETTOLANI (invitee, IT), Colin VINCENT (UK), Andrew WILLIAMS (ESO)

1. Welcome

- a. The Flemish Research Foundation Board delegated Conny Aerts to welcome the ASTRONET board at the Faculty club, the reception corner of the University.
- b. The Chair welcomed the Board and especially the two new members (Hungary and Sweden). More partners are expected to join ASTRONET and the Board should help in accelerating the various processes of decision in the different countries. The actions considered for ASTRONET and the construction of the new Science Vision require a complete representation of European Astronomical communities.
- c. The current situation of contacts in the different countries was distributed by the General Secretary. The chair will prepare a letter for re-inviting our colleagues who were (associate) members of the ERANET ASTRONET.

2. Approbation of agenda

3. Approbation of the minutes of last meeting

- a. The minutes of the Board of 9 Dec 2017 were approved.
- b. The Board had held a short telecom on 24 Apr 2017 for the approbation of accession:
 - i. Sweden and Hungary were welcomed. The accession documents will now be signed by the chair.
 - ii. We noted that Spain confirmed its accession and the signature is in progress.
 - iii. We examined the request from Ukraine to obtain an Observer status because of funding difficulties. It is recalled that Observer status is reserved to international organizations. Therefore we again encouraged Ukraine to be a full member in ASTRONET, and we recalled that a local institute or university could become the representative member in the Board, provided that a national authority gives them the mandate. The General Secretary will answer them.

4. Review of the working plan, nomination of the executive committee members

- a. Presentation of the working plan, as detailed in the MoU. The working plan is built on two main pillars: Implementation and follow-up of the previous recommendations and Development of a new Science Vision and Prospective. A wider representation of European countries in ASTRONET is however absolutely mandatory for the impact of these actions.
- b. Actions 2.3 and 2.7 should not be completely separated: ground small telescopes are also important for space data. Overlap is not 100% but linking the two actions is important.
- c. MINECO will coordinate the survey of optical telescopes and ESO volunteered to participate to this action. It is recognized as very important for the 4-8/10m class telescopes in the era of ELT. Developing a specific Instrumentation plan in support for ground follow-up of space missions is never too late, but it may become so for EUCLID/PLATO. Time Domain Astronomy is probably one very good example for this coordination. In the framework of the ESO-ESA agreement, time resolved spectroscopy for the planets is probably one important aspect for European Astronomy. Note also that US/SLOAN is organizing similar things (also in preparation to LSST).

- d. Ground-Space coordination should not be only an ESO-ESA action but should also concern the national funding agencies and the existing network(s) of small telescopes... including questions like what are the priorities of the community? There is also a relation to OPTICON (Trans National Access + R&D).
- e. ASTRONET should continue to keep an eye on solar astronomy developments in Europe.
- f. CMB is also an important action to be followed by ASTRONET (see agenda item 9).
- g. As a conclusion of this agenda item, it is recalled that the work in the new ASTRONET will be mainly supported by the member's in-kind contributions. The Board members are requested to send names for potential panel/working group/work packages members in preparation of the next Board meeting. It is thus decided to postpone the nomination of the work package leaders and executive committee members. We note also that WP2 should probably be split into several actions.

5. Contribution fees situation. Budget discussion

- a. This is an internal action at the level of NWO (Saskia Mattheussen). It should start soon now the last issues at the financial department level are resolved. Invoices for 2017 will be sent by NWO to the different members.
- b. The actions of the Board will soon require a budget: travel for panel members, and potentially some funding for the refurbishing of the webpage.

6. Nomination of the general secretary

- a. It was postponed to the next board meeting. DM, as past ASTRONET coordinator, continues to act as General Secretary

7. Report of the EAS meeting (Sofia, Ronald, Denis)

- a. EAS is considered as the voice of the community. The EWASS meetings are now well established and gather each year an important fraction of the European Astronomical community.
- b. For EWASS2017 (<http://eas.unige.ch/EWASS2017/index.jsp>), two special sessions are related to ASTRONET: SS01 (European Forum of Astronomical Communities in the New Member States) and SS22 (Making the case for European astronomy and space science: public and political engagement)

8. EWASS 2018 and Forum of Astronomical Communities. ASTRONET message. Goals for ASTRONET (Sofia)

- a. 3-6 April 2018, Liverpool (<http://eas.unige.ch/EWASS2018/>)
- b. Special session on Science Vision (Colin + chair of the science vision document).
- c. ASTRONET should consider giving talks during the plenary session to explain the strategic exercise on the prospective, and probably should contribute to the invitation of US decadal survey representatives.

9. CMB joint APPEC and ASTRONET initiative (Ronald, Denis, Antonio)

- a. A CMB-E4 infrastructure proposal has been submitted, with the support by ASTRONET and APPEC as part of the roadmap (a copy of the Letter of Support has been distributed to the Board members).
- b. Luca and Paolo will make contact with Antonio Masiero to check the status of our permanent invitation of the Chair of APPEC to the Board of ASTRONET. For ASTRONET it is very important to include the discussion around gravitational waves and the future of this field. If the Einstein telescope is supported, we should discuss its inclusion into the roadmap and a preparatory work is necessary. CTA was a joint priority between APPEC and ASTRONET and the follow-up of its implementation is part of our working plan.

10. ASTERICS policy forum (Denis)

- a. The goal of the policy forum stays as defined, i.e.: "... will study how to harmonize joint and efficient scheduling, operation and interoperability of the various multi-wavelength and multi-messenger telescopes..." As described before, this question could be addressed through 4 main strategic topics: 1/ Joint time allocation, 2/ observing strategies for multi-messenger campaigns, 3/ data access and sharing, and 4/ general policies of common

interest (towards next generation ESFRI RI). However it appeared that starting this question with these four items was seen as too theoretical and technocratic and that it is preferable to work on a few typical examples and in a second step to synthesize the findings and prepare draft policies.

- b. The coordination of ground and space projects and Time Domain Astronomy are probably good examples of such science policy cases.
- c. DM will contact E-ELT-PST (Giuseppe Bono, bono@roma2.infn.it), CTA (Jim Hinton, jim.hinton@mpi-hd.mpg.de). SKA (Robert Braun, R.Braun@skatelescope.org). KM3NET (Rosa Coniglione, Antoine Kouchner: coniglione@Ins.infn.it, kouchner@apc.univ-paris7.fr, phase1-sp@km3net.de)
- d. This work should clearly be considered as a long term approach, especially in the current phase of implementation of the new ESFRI-RI.

11. Astronomy heritage (Paolo)

- a. See presentation.
- b. The Board members are requested to send names of contact persons for Astronomy Heritage in the different countries.

12. ELTRC follow-up: plan and strategy (Jesús, not present. Slides presented by DM)

- a. The Board considers that the size of the telescope is not really relevant for developing a coordination. It is however important to complete the Large Telescopes review and to note that OPTICON has a database of small telescope facilities.
- b. After discussion, the Board considers that developing a study entitled "Facilities for time domain astronomy" is worth the effort (Conny and Laszlo are volunteers).
- c. ESO has an interest in this activity with respect to the integration of non-EU or non-ESO members for participating to the science activities without having a formal ESO-membership.

13. Situation of Ground-Space coordination? (ESA, ESO)

- a. New missions require more ground support than in the past. It worked for Gaia but through the initiative of the Gaia collaboration and not through the DPAC, thanks to a scientific involvement and strong commitments but without formal agreements (except for VST and Gaia astrometry).
- b. PLATO and EUCLID: formal collaborations are considered (especially on PLATO) but no formal agreement is in place at this time. There is a shared understanding that the community will submit large programs to the OPC.
- c. New ESA-DG requires stronger links with ESO on three aspects: Science, Technology and Outreach. Rob Ivison and Fabio Favata are representatives in ESA-SPC/ESO-STC respectively.
- d. Goodwill is not the solution and in any case it has a cost. Channels should be kept open but commitments are difficult. Realistic approach to solve scientific questions (community involvement).

14. Science Vision and Infrastructure Roadmap: plan to restart the actions (Colin)

- a. See slides. A two-year process typically. Start in 2018 and completion in 2020.
- b. Review of US-DS and ESA-Cosmic Vision. Note: US has made a lessons learned and best practices in 2015. A SWOT analysis of the previous exercise to be done at the ASTRONET level. Important to have diversity in gender and in stage of career within the participants.
- c. Support from ASTRONET, Lead agency, EAS, EU =>H2020-Infrasupp 2018-2020: "To reinforce European research infrastructure policy and international collaboration".
- d. Question about the motivation for young peoples for this exercise with the potential lack of new large infrastructures (TDA, VLT Roadmap, Instrument capabilities...). Science Vision is probably more important this time than the roadmap itself as this roadmap will probably not change much because of the long timelines of the Big Science projects.
- e. So the driving idea for the new exercise is: 1/ a new Science Vision, 2/ a strategic plan to implement the science vision within the infrastructure roadmap, and 3/ analyze the

- i. Send contacts for the Heritage Astronomy network (all to Luca/Paolo).
- j. ELTRC activities should continue (Jesus + link with OPTICON) and add Time Domain Astronomy as a specific and new subject to develop (Conny/Laszlo)
- k. Terms of reference for the new SV+IR exercise (Colin).
- l. Identification of suitable candidates for the coordination of the SV+IR exercise All (to Colin, Ronald, Denis).
- m. Distribute the EII Document (Future of European interferometry) and VLTI roadmap (Denis)

20. Date of next board meeting

- a. A doodle will be circulated. Probably not possible to hold it at EWASS2018 (will be held in April already because of IAU GA 2018).
- b. LV offers to hold the next meeting in Bologna.