

Jumping JIVE



Minutes JJ Exec Telecon I 4 May 2017

Attendance: Francisco “Paco” Colomer, Huib van Langevelde, Ilse van Bommel, Zsolt Paragi, Leonid Gurvits, Bob Campbell, Tiziana Venturi, Pablo de Vicente, Antonio Chrysostomou, René Vermeulen, Arpad Szomoru, Patrick Charlot, Aukelien van den Poll (minutes).

Minutes:

0. Paco Colomer welcomes all participants to the meeting.

1. WP1 – Management, Huib van Langevelde.

This Exec Telecon should have been organized earlier but was delayed to wait for the arrival of the Project Manager (Paco Colomer). Huib proposed to make Ilse van Bommel WP leader for WP2, this proposal was accepted by the Exec committee; the Project Manager will inform the Project Board.

Question from Project Manager: does everybody have access to the wiki? If not, please contact Aukelien van den Poll.

Action item 1: all WP leaders to check that they have access to the JJ wiki.

Considering the budget; there is local budget at the institutes but also a central travel budget per WP located at JIVE. WP leaders are responsible for the central budget for their WP and will be informed on the progress on a regular basis.

2. WP2 – Outreach, Ilse van Bommel.

Gina Maffey started in March as outreach officer. She is looking at the JIVE social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and websites (jive.eu, evlbi.org). A couple of meetings related to the WP are on the calendar for the near future (i.e. NAC meeting and PARI meeting). Paco Colomer is working on a list of contact persons at the EVN institutes who may help with outreach.

Zsolt Paragi was invited for a NWO event called “Bessensap”, at this meeting scientists are invited to give a talk for a public of journalists. Leonid Gurvits introduced Gina to the Ruimtevaart magazine.

Part of the WP is outreach aimed at peers, this will be addressed in upcoming meetings.

3. WP3 – New Partnerships, Leonid Gurvits

For task 1 there have been contacts with the Polish embassy and attempts have been made to set a meeting with the Finish ministry.

For task 2 there has been contact with Hungary and Portugal. Other options for VLBI are China, Thailand and Israel. The first deliverable for the WP is coming in month 8 (July 2017).

4. WP4 – LOFAR, René Vermeulen

The result of the WP is a document investigating the ERIC structure for LOFAR. The first deliverable is expected in month 16. Informal discussions are going on in the LOFAR board. Currently a policy officer is being hired to support this WP.

5. WP5 – New Elements, Pablo de Vicente

Task 1 is for the enhancement of EVN affiliated stations, Kunming observations have proceeded (not in S1-2017). E-Merlin no news, APERTIF no news, 2 tests have been done with several telescopes for 43 GHz.

Task 2 is aimed at supporting new telescopes. Ghana took part in observations, no fringes. Yebees and Ghana carried out observations on 3 May, no results yet.

Thailand signed an MoU with IGN (ES), 3 people from Thailand are currently at Yebees. Jay Blanchard visited Ghana for the WP. Bernard Asabre from Ghana will visit the upcoming TOG meeting in Latvia.

Task 3 archive, no news.

6. WP6 – Geodetic capabilities, Patrick Charlot

Task 1, data interface, no actual coding has been done, better specifications are needed. Input is requested from the community, this will be discussed at the EVGA meeting in Sweden at the end of May.

Task 2, experiment definition, Mark Kettenis (JIVE) is working on this.

Task 3, application station positions, no progress until tasks 1 and 2 have been developed further.

Huib reminded people to spend the resources, people have to be hired to spend the money. Patrick informed the Exec that the plan is to hire somebody starting the second year of the project.

7. WP7 – VLBI Future, Tiziana Venturi

A kick-off telecon was held with Tiziana, Zsolt Paragi and Michael Lindqvist to talk about selection of a core team to write the white paper. A brainstorm meeting might be needed in the broader community, proposed by the end of 2017 or start of 2018.

There are strong connections between this WP and WP6, 9 and 10. Experts for the core team will come from these WPs. There is also contact with the EVN CBD, Tiziana was invited to the upcoming CBD meeting in Torun.

The Policy Officer can be involved in this WP as planned in the budget.

8. WP8 – Global VLBI Interfaces, Arpad Szomoru

Task 1, modernizing SCHED. A first step was taken in forming a Forum as advisory group (deliverable D8.1). Developers and users are included in this forum. A first telecon was held.

Task 2, remote access and monitoring. Alexander Neidhart is hiring a person for this task. This is taking some time, the EU Project Officer is aware of this and accepted our proposal to shift the deliverables according to the start date of the new person for this task.

9. WP10 – VLBI in the SKA, Antonio Chrysostomou

The SKA office is in the process of hiring a SKA VLBI Scientist, 6 people will be interviewed.

Zsolt Paragi will attend the EWASS to talk about FRB science. Cormac Reynolds will talk at a meeting in Montreal.

The SKA costs savings affect VLBI on Band5 (no Band5 receivers in the core). This could be a problem for VLBI.

10. A.O.B.

Suggestion for the next Exec Telecon: 3 July. A doodle will be sent around.

Action item 2: PC will send doodle poll to set date of next JJ Exec telecom..

Summary of Action Items:

- Action item 1: all WP leaders to check that they have access to the JJ wiki.
- Action item 2: PC will send doodle poll to set date of next JJ Exec telecom..

11. WP9 – VLBI in Africa, Rob Beswick

(input sent by e-mail AFTER the JJ Exec telecom, included here for information)

First JJ sponsored training trips have now happened:

- Jay Blanchard & Alastair Gunn where in Ghana last week (~18th - 26th April 2017). This was part of a 3 week long course held at GSSTI (Ghana Space Science and Technology Institute) to teach the 2017 cohort of Ghanaian and Kenyan students technical, instrumentation and operational aspects of radio astronomy. The course was run in tandem with the UK's Newton DARA project with a number of other tutors from the UK and SA attending. This course is still going on now. Jay & Alastair focussed on aspects relating to VLBI operations. During the teaching the students made some use of the newly converted 32-m at the institute. (Others involved in this unit training included - Ben Stappers (Manchester), Tom Scragg (Manchester) and Melvin Hoare (Leeds) - All funded via the DARA project). ** This will directly contribute to JJ - D9.2.

Progress is being made in gathering expert EU tutors for other elements of the 4 unit course being delivered in various countries (contribution listed above was part of one of these units). Many thanks to those that have suggested people. These have come from a number of JJ partner institutes. Suggestions for tutors are very much welcome for the entire JJ/DARA period. ** Directly related to JJ-D9.2

Related DARA training in units is ongoing (linked to, but not funded directly by JJ). The next training units include:

- a) Ghana - Unit 2/3 ongoing now, plus Cohort#2 training in Unit 1 starting next week.
- b) Botswana - 2 week of unit 4 training starting in ~ 1weeks time (Lecturers/Tutors - Roger Deane (SA) /Wendy Williams (Herts, UK))
- c) Zambia - 2.5 weeks Unit 4 training. Starting week ~17 May (Lecturers/Tutors - Jack Radcliffe (Groningen/Man) + Luke Hindson (Herts))
- d) Kenya - 2 weeks Unit 4 training - starting last week of May (Lecturers/Tutors - Minnie Mao & Hayden Ramparadath (both Man))

First TOG related activities are now starting. JJ WP9 will be part-funding 1 Ghanaian staff member (Bernard Duah Asabere) to attend the next TOG meeting. This trip is part funded by RadioNet so is an efficient use of JJ monies. And is directly linked to the 4th item proposed in this WP. (Assistance in setting up of AVN Technical forum).

Short exchanges Visits to EU countries / institutes -- There are ongoing discussions with a number of potential host institutes (e.g. ASTRON) regarding potentially hosting students/staff. These are progressing well. There are potential opportunities to combine some of this activity with planned internship programmes at ASTRON for example which may result in additional funding being leveraged allowing either more or longer trips to be funded. This is ongoing.