

LASSIE-ITN Plenary Members Group Meeting

15th February 2011

Wilkins Garden Room, University College London

Minutes

Attendance

Present:

HWU: Mark Collings (MC)
AU: John Thrower (JT)
OBSParis: Jean Louis Lemaire (JLL)
UM: Helmet Zacharias (HZ)
MPG: Cornelia Jäger (CJ)
INAF: Giovanni Strazzulla (GS)
LUO: Harold Linnartz (HL)
Chalmers: Dinko Chakarov (DC)
UGot: Gunnar Nyman (GN)
UCL: Steve Price (SP), Wendy Brown (WB), Serena Viti (SV)
QUB: Tom Field (TF) *via* videoconferencing
Graphic Science: Ben Johnson (BJ)

Apologies received from: Martin McCoustra (MMc), Liv Hornekær (LH), Elisabetta Palumbo (MEP), Nigel Mason (NM) and Helen Fraser (HF).

HWU, AU and INAF were represented at the meeting by non-members of the PMG: MC, JT and GS respectively. These individuals were proposed as proxy representatives with full voting rights for their institution. No objections were raised.

1. Approval was sought for the Minutes of the PMG Meeting of October 14th 2010. HL commented that in the section discussing the Leiden training event (page 2) the minutes could be misconstrued as implying that the proposed organising panel (NM, LH, HL, BJ, MMc, MC) is also responsible for organising the Brussels outreach event. Otherwise the minutes were approved.
2. Discussion of the full extent of the role of the International Assessment & Advisory Committee (IAAC) will be postponed to a future meeting at which an IAAC member can be present. MC notes that it was hoped that the IAAC would have time to draft a comment on LASSIE's year 1 Progress Report to the REA. However, due to time constraints it is unlikely that the report can be prepared in time to allow the IAAC comment to be drafted by the electronic submission date. Appending the IAAC comments with the submitted hard copy may be possible.
HL notes that Eric Herbst and Tim Lee are expected to visit LUO in the near future, so discussions about the role of the IAAC may be possible at this time.

3. Current status of recruitment within LASSIE:

- HWU*:** Tranche 1 ER (24 months) starting 01/03/11: Hakima Mokrane
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) starting 01/02/11, UK work permit pending:
Divya Sharma
Tranche 2 ESR (24 months) shared with AU.
- AU:** Tranche 1 ER (24 months) in post: John Thrower
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Andrew Cassidy
Tranche 2 ESR (12 months) starting 01/05/11: Farah Anjum Khan.
- OBSParis:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Lisseth Gavilan
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) & Tranche 2 ESR (36 months) to be split
into 3 ESR positions of 24 months, researchers assigned.
- UM*:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Guillem Aumatell Gomez
Tranche 2 ESR (36 months) delayed after interviewed candidate accepted
another position.
- MPG:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Tobias Albertsson
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Tolou Sabri
Tranche 2 ESR (24 months) vacant?
- INAF:** Tranche 2 ER (24 months) appointment delayed due to changes in Italian
law.
- LUO:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Steven Cuyllé
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Gleb Fedoseev
Tranche 2 ESR (36 months) in post: I. San. Jose Garcia
Tranche 2 ESR (12 months) assigned to researcher in place.
- Chalmers*:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) starting 01/05/11: Anna Clemens
Tranche 2 ESR (12 months) vacant.
- UGot:** Tranche 1 ER (24 months) in post: Dylan Drake-Wilhelm
Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Bethmini Senevirathne
Tranche 2 ESR (12 months) shared with SU
- UCL:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Fabrizio Puletti
Tranche 2 ESR (36 months) in post: Angela Occhiogrosso
- OU:** Tranche 1 ESR (24 months) in post: Ewelina Szymanska
Tranche 2 ESR (24 months) in post: Binukumar G. Nair
- QUB:** Tranche 1 ESR (36 months) in post: Alan McLoughlin
Tranche 2 ESR (36 months) in post: Elena Andrea-Muntean
- SU:** Tranche 1 ESR (27 months) starting 01/06/11: Aleksu Suutarinen
Tranche 2 ESR (21 months) starting 01/05/11 pending UK work permit:
Pavel Elkind

* Beneficiaries for whom an application of a non-cash extension may be necessary

3.1. Beneficiary reports: MC notes that reports have been received from all beneficiaries except OBSParis and QUB. JLL confirms that a report has been sent from OBSParis, but will re-send it.

3.2. RCG report: HL repeated comments on

- the importance of common projects and the ‘added value’ of collaborative work;
- the value of acknowledging LASSIE in any relevant papers in preparation even if the research was performed before LASSIE commenced;
- posting papers on the website;
- developing a LASSIE newsletter.

HL commented that several other networks in the proposal phase have suggested forming links with LASSIE.

3.3. TCG report: An ESR representative is required for the TCG. It is agreed that the ESRs should elect a representative during the Leiden Training Event (4.1), and that a temporary representative be appointed. Fabrizio Puletti (UCL) has agreed to take this temporary role.

JT notes that the beneficiary reports contained sufficient information to complete the TCG summary.

3.4. OPG report: It is suggested that a deputy be appointed for OPG. WB and SP agree to take this role jointly. MC will write the OPG summary - further information about outreach activities will be required.

BJ suggests adding a standard line of text in everyone’s email signature to improve LASSIE’s ‘brand recognition’.

3.5. Consortium Agreement: all beneficiaries have committed to signing the Consortium Agreement, effective from February 1st 2011. MC is waiting for one signature after which the signed document can be compiled, copied and distributed.

Following the legal opinions provided by legal representatives of LUO and UCL, it will be necessary to seek the European Commission’s permission to obtain an amendment to the Grant Agreement, in order that the redistribution of the researcher hours outlined in the Consortium Agreement has full legal legitimacy.

3.6. Declarations of Conformity: MC noted the requirement for completion of these. This should not take very long, and it should be possible to bring the network up-to-date with these in conjunction with submitting the Year 1 Progress Report. MC will circulate information about how they are completed.

4. Events 2011

4.1. Leiden Training Event: Dates are confirmed as Mon 16th May – Fri 27th May 2011.

HL distributed a more detailed draft program.

In addition to Astrochemistry Lecture Course and Exercises this includes:

- 2 days of project management courses provided by an external company at a cost of roughly € 10,000.
- ½ day Presentation Skills course to be given by HL, free of charge.
- 1 day of Outreach Training.

BJ provided an outline for 4 x ½ day Outreach Training Programme, at a cost of £2000 per day.

It was agreed that a 3 x ½ day Outreach Training Programme can be accommodated by scheduling activity on the Friday morning of the second week.

MC noted that the 2 week programme is now very full, and that there is no room for other activities that had previously been suggested, such as presentations from the industrial partners and research presentations from LASSIE PIs. It was agreed that the industrial partner presentations could be held in conjunction with Astrosurf.

4.2. Summer School, Bologna: GS provided details of the Summer School “Astrochemistry with ALMA”

A notification email has previously been circulated by MEP, giving the website: www.alma.inaf.it

Dates are confirmed as June 13th-17th, 2011.

This event is not restricted to LASSIE, and has a limit of places: deadline for application is March 25th.

This event should be attended by all LASSIE ESRs and is recommended for the LASSIE ERs.

4.3. Astrosurf/COST WG2 Meeting, Edinburgh

Proposed dates: Wed Aug 30th – Fri Sep 2nd, to coincide with the close of the Edinburgh festival.

These dates clash with ECOSS. However, it was agreed that these dates should be accepted since ECOSS does not have an astrochemistry session this year and that no one within LASSIE is intending to go.

Proposed organising committee: MMc, MEP, HF and MC.

Proposed invited speakers: Tim Lee (Computational session), David Field (Experimental session), Daren Caruana (extra session); invited speakers for the Observational session and replacements for the above to be proposed by the COST WG 2 Committee.

4.4. Young Astronomers Meeting / PMG Meeting Paris

Meetings scheduled for some time in October 2011.

JLL thinks that there may be some other meeting that this needs to be organised around.

4.5. Stars ‘R’ Us, Edinburgh Science Festival

Dates confirmed as April 8th-10th, 2011, at Our Dynamic Earth.

SRU to be staffed by students from HWU and SU. However, LASSIE ESRs and ERs are invited to take part. Since this event is before the Outreach training at the Leiden Training Event (4.1), the ESRs/ERs should have some prior experience of outreach activities and a reasonable command of English. The event will contribute to training activities, and all costs will be covered by LASSIE.

BJ reported on the refurbishment of the SRU display by Graphic Science.

In order for SRU to be used by LASSIE and refurbished by Graphic Science, the SRU Consortium Agreement must be amended to make LASSIE and Graphic Science signatories. It is proposed that one representative signs on behalf of LASSIE. MMc and NM as the LASSIE coordinator and Chair of the OPG

are the obvious choices. However, as both are already signatories of the SRU there is potential for a conflict of interest. The PMG do not consider this to be problematic.

4.6. Stars 'R' Us, International Year of Chemistry Outreach Event, Brussels

Dates confirmed as Thu 23rd – Fri 24th June, 2011, with a possible extension to Sat 25th.

NM circulated information on the event (Appendix 1) *via* email prior to the meeting. LASSIE will provide the SRU display and staff for 'zone 2' of the event.

5. Secondments

MC notes that there are no particular Commission restrictions on where secondments can be undertaken, and apparently nothing to prevent an ESR/ER from undertaking a secondment in a country in which they are restricted from being employed by the mobility criteria. However, it is suggested that this situation should be avoided if possible.

LASSIE will impose no restrictions as to which institutions ESRs/ERs can undertake their academic secondments; *i.e.*, they can choose nodes in the same country as that at which they are employed.

CJ asked about the possibility of ESRs completing an academic secondment somewhere outside of the network. MC will check the Commission regulations on the issue.

It is likely that industrial partners will need host more than one ESR at a time for industrial secondments in order to complete these on time.

6. Language Courses

PIs were reminded that LASSIE is compelled to offer each ESR/ER a local language course. The purpose of such a course is to assist the researcher with social integration, and is distinct from the ability of the researcher to communicate adequately in the academic environment.

JT confirms that there is a question addressing this issue in the Initial Questionnaire.

7. Events 2012

7.1. Summer School, Leiden 2012.

HL confirms that the Lorentz Center is already heavily booked for the summer 2012. However there is a 3 day slot available May 14th-16th, prior to University closing on 17th and 18th.

There is some possibility of joint Summer School with another network organised by Xander Tielens.

7.2. Young Astronomers Meeting / PMG Meeting 2012

This is due to be hosted by HWU in October 2012.

7.3. LASSIE PMG, February 2012

UCL remains the favoured venue for this management meeting.

8. Any Other Business

- HL commented on the need to improve communication and cooperation within the network. In particular, scientific visits by PIs would be a good way to increase collaboration and produce joint publications, which will be a good outward

indicator of cooperation within the network. Including some science in management meetings was also suggested, either in the form of allowing each PI 5 minutes to talk about research activities, or inviting a series of short (say 10 minute) presentations from several PIs.

- HL proposes a book as an output from the LASSIE network. This should be an up-to-date research publication, summarising progress in the field during the 4 years in which the LASSIE network operated. To ensure conciseness and timeliness, its structure should be carefully considered and deadlines strictly adhered to. Having ESRs / ERs as co-authors of sections would also be worthwhile.
- MC proposes an article about LASSIE as a means of promotion (as opposed to a research publication). Astronomy & Geophysics, and or other similar journals/newsletters in languages other than English may be suitable publication sites. New Scientist was also discussed. BJ suggests that employing a science writer may provide good contacts and be cost effective.
- MC proposes that when the Year 1 Progress Report is completed, work should start on preparing LASSIE accounts, so that preparation of the financial aspects of the Periodic Report due in February 2012 can proceed smoothly.

ACTIONS

- MC to edit the minutes of the PMG meeting 14/10/10, and send them to JLL for posting as publicly accessible on the LASSIE website.
- MC to draft the OPG report.
- MC to circulate information on completing Declarations of Conformity
- MMc, MEP, HF and MC to commence organisation of Astrosurf / COST WG2 meeting.
- MC to check for meetings that the YAM/PMG 2011 should be organised around.
- MC to investigate Commission regulations on secondments hosted outside the network.
- HL to contact Xander Tielens regarding Summer Schools 2012.

Appendix 1

Proposal for ESF Exhibition in Brussels in June 23-24(5) 2011 on

Astrochemistry and the search for life

2011 has been designated as the International Year of Chemistry (YC 2011) and is a UN approved initiative of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). This provides us with a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate to the world the vital role of chemistry in both understanding natural phenomena and in the technologies processes that shape everyday life.

One of the most fascinating and exciting areas of modern science is the investigation of the role of chemistry in the origins of life itself and the exploration of chemistry on other planets both in our own solar system and more recently in the atmospheres of planets around other stars (so called exoplanets). Therefore we wish to host an exhibition in Brussels in June 2011 that will both highlight the role of chemistry in answering two of the largest as yet unresolved issues of modern science 'How did life begin in Earth?'; and 'Is life common across the universe'. The exhibition is aimed both at politicians (e.g. members of the European Parliament) and members of EU structures (e.g. Framework programme) that determine the role of the European research community in answering these questions. It also aims to inspire the next generation of scientists by being open to students and younger children whilst also demonstrating to the wider public both the excitement and value of such scientific studies.

Accordingly the exhibition is planned to be held over two/three days, The first day being for MEPs, local officials of EU programmes (e.g. Framework programme, NATO ESF, COST) and other guests from across Europe representing governments, national agencies and industry. Thursday June 23rd has been selected as it coincides with a formal Plenary session of the Parliament and MEPs will be present prior to their departure on Friday. Reception and talks in late afternoon therefore are likely to have best chance of attendance.

High profile speakers drawn from ESA and EU space programmes will front the day and give overview on the importance of such science to EU community. These presentations will be short but clear as to role of chemistry in modern Astronomy and search for life

The second (full) day aimed at schools and student groups and the general public and a third day (funds permitting) open to all may be added. Speakers/participants on these days are chosen from those who are recognised as proficient in public engagement.

The exhibition is planned around five zones;

1. Zone 1; Creating the elements – how the elements of life are made in stellar synthesis and star death.
2. Zone 2; Stars R Us – how the molecules of life maybe synthesized in the interstellar medium and brought to Earth (comets and meteorites)

3. Zone 3: Origins – how life may have begun on earth (and other planets)
4. Zone 4. The search for life - how we are searching for life in our solar system (particularly Mars) and how we may look for life on planets around other stars (exoplanets)
5. Zone 5 Star Trek, the reality – How (EU) industry is developing the technology that allows us to explore the solar system and beyond.

Each of these zones will be developed in collaboration with a EU partner project. For example;

Zone 1 in collaboration with ‘Eurogenesis’ an ESF funded Eurocore

Zone 2 in collaboration with members of the EU ITN Lassie exploiting previous UK-French exhibition material and COST Action CM0805 The Chemical Cosmos

Zone 3 in collaboration with EANA the European Astrobiology Network Association and members of former COST Action D.

Zone 4 In collaboration with EU Framework programme Europlanet and

Zone 5 in collaboration with technology workshop programme of the EU Framework programme Europlanet and ESA.

Furthermore Europlanet will provide support through their European media centre (which already engages directly with MEPs and other EU officials as well as organising pan European press releases through a network of national reporters); Lassie will provide younger researchers to the exhibition (trained by experienced media company in public engagement) whilst ESA will provide industrial contacts, larger display materials and access to national space agencies.

N J Mason

29/01/2010 on behalf of exhibition consortia

Key participants expected to attend and/or involved in preparations:

Science leaders (Steering group)

Professor Michel Blanc (Vice-President for Research at Ecole Polytechnique) PI of Europlanet and lead scientist in planetary missions (Cassin- Huygens to Saturn/Titan and forthcoming Tandem to Jovian system)

Professor Cecilia Ceccarelli Laboratoire d'Astrophysique de Grenoble leading Member of Herschel and ALMA research teams. Co chair of COST Action CM0805..

Professor Pepe Cernicharo (DAMIR Madrid) leading member of ALMA and Herschel research teams.

Professor Charles Cockell (Open University, UK) one of Europe's leading 'astrobiologists' and Coordinator of Carex, member of ESA Life Sciences Working Group (2009-); ESA Planetary Protection Working Group (2006-) Co-ordinator, ESA Topical Team GESSE (Geomicrobiology for Space Settlement and Exporation) (2009-)

Professor Marie-Lise Dubernet (LERMA, Observatory of Paris) Director of LPMAA (Molecular Physics Laboratory for the Atmosphere and Astrophysics) and Cordinator an d Chair of VAMDC project

Professor Christian Muller Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy CoI of SPICAM instrument for Mars exploration.

Professor Helmut Rucker (Head of the Space Research Institute Graz/Austrian Academy of Science AAS) and **Dr H Lammer** (Space Research Institute AAS Graz).

Professor Francis Raulin (Lisa University of Paris) leading member of Huygens team and studies of Titan, Co-Investigator of the CIRS (Cassini), ACP and GC-MS (Huygens) experiments He is Co.I of the COSAC and COSIMA experiments of the Rosetta European cometary mission and deputy Team leader of the MOMA experiment on ExoMars. He was Chair of COSPAR Commission F (Life Sciences), Vice Chair of COSPAR Planetary Protection Panel, 1st Vice-President of ISSOL and Chair of the Exo/astrobiology working group of CNES. He is currently member of the Planetary Protection Working Group of ESA and President of SFE (Société Française d'Exobiologie).

Professor Stephan Schlemmer (University of Cologne) Professor of experimental physics at I. Phys. Institut, Universität zu Köln. Head of the laboratory astrophysics group. Coordinator of Cologne Database for Molecular Spectroscopy (CDMS),

Prof Xander Tielens (Leiden University, Netherlands). He leads a group at Leiden Observatory on the origin, evolution, and role of large PAH molecules in the Universe. He is the Project Scientist of HIFI, the heterodyne instrument on board of the Herschel Space Observatory (1997-present) and was NASA Project Scientist of the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) (2005-2007), and Coordinator of "The Molecular Universe", a Marie Curie Research and Training Network funded under the European Commission Framework Program #6 (2004-2008).

We are fortunate to have the following leaders in Public understanding/Science communication to form a communications group

Professor Jean Pierre Lebreton Huygens Project Scientist and Mission Manager. working with the Rosetta comet probe and its Plasma Consortium Experiment, and the Venus Express space probe he was responsible for several of ESAs public engagement activities related to the Cassini-Huygens probe.

Professor Steve Miller (UCL, UK) a former journalist he established the Europlanet media centre and has run many workshops on training in science communication

Professor Vittorio Manno formerly of International Space Science Institute in Berne Switzerland who has organised many meetings and public events for public as well as ESA

Prof. Manuel Grande (University of Wales Aberystwyth, UK) who is chair of the EPSC (European Planetary Science Congress) but also arranges a series of technology workshops to engage with industry