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1. Document information

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Authors Huib Jan van Langevelde (JIVE)

1.1 Dissemination Level

Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

1.2 Content

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2. A plan for advertising RadioNet facilities to astronomers that traditionally are less involved in Radio Astronomy

2.1 Introduction

In this document we propose a detailed plan to implement the activities of QueSERA subtask 2 - Plan for reaching astronomers across Europe. This work package is led by JIVE and coordinated by the RadioNet3 office on coordination with the various TNA programmes and notably the other NAs on training, science and engineering.

Because a plan for this 'Advertising' subtask is a RadioNet3 deliverable, a final version of this document needs to be discussed and accepted by the RN3 management and Board before implementation.

This 'advertising' sub-task aims at publicizing the RadioNet3 facility capabilities, targeting fellow astronomers, who are in communities (geographically or topically) that are traditionally not engaged much in radio astronomy. Ideally, we should in the long term attract more users for the RadioNet facilities from these communities. Moreover, astronomers from a number of European countries are not involved in defining the science priorities for the current programmes or the facilities of the future. Next to the very successful TNA programme, it is important to advocate the usage of our facilities in relation to science themes that can be important for ALMA and SKA in a more strategic context.

In particular, QueSERA, through subtask 2, could stimulate visits of radio experts to national astronomy meetings in European countries where there is no RadioNet3 membership or present colloquia at astronomy institutes in these countries. In these presentations it will be important to advertise the range of RadioNet facilities, but also the existence of the European SKA Consortium as a platform to be involved in the definition of the SKA.

On the other hand, it will be important to focus on the participation of radio astronomers in conferences on science topics that traditionally have limited engagement in radio astronomy. This is probably the best way to advocate the increasing breadth of science topics that can be addressed with radio centimetre and millimetre facilities.

In addition, RadioNet has a desire to be visible alongside other research infrastructures and in European scale research infrastructure meetings, which is primarily a responsibility of the RadioNet3 management. Moreover, specific actions that target European policy makers are implemented in QueSERA subtask 1. In subtask 3 the joint effort of outreach officers at the RadioNet facilities is addressing the general public. Across all these activities a range of outreach material is produced of which some may be useful for this 'Advertising' subtask.

Excluding overheads, there is 9000€ available for this subtask 2 'Advertising' activity. Other resources that could be deployable for this are some of the project scientist time and possibly some of the outreach material budget.

2.2 Considerations

In several discussions, including some in the RadioNet3 proposal definition process, a number of actions have been considered which could be ways to implement this 'Advertising' role. Minor deviations from the priorities in the original proposal are proposed here. For example, the SKA organisation has undergone a phase change, resulting in a new and rather independent organisation. As a result the ESKAC has identified its major mission to herd the SKA science case with respect to European astronomers. Advocating SKA as part of the radio agenda is still a RadioNet activity, but should probably no longer be a separate item in our activity list.

In recent discussions, targeting the astronomy community with an attractive portal on radio facilities has come forward. Although it is not budgeted, it is discussed below as a possible activity that may be effective in advertising radio astronomy to potential users.

Combined with the original plans of visiting 'non-radio' institutes and sponsoring attendance in specific astronomy meetings, there are possibly 3 activities to implement

1. Targeted visits to institutes and countries where radio astronomy is not traditionally very visible.
2. Stimulate "radio-astronomer" talks at meetings on astronomical topics that have little radio contributions
3. Enhance the visibility of radio-net facilities on the web specifically aiming at prospective users.

As a fourth option it has been suggested to organize an international meeting aimed at an audience of astronomers, but non-experts. I do worry that that would not draw a large audience; EWASS sessions have that role already and seems to have problems attracting a substantial crowd.

In addition the general outreach programme of RadioNet3 should have this category of target audience in mind while defining their outreach material. Specifically we expect RadioNet3 to consider its presence at more general meeting like the EWASS, URSI and IAU GA's.

In several of the items below the need for a small programme committee is required. We propose that this committee is made up of the Activity Leader, the RN3 project scientist and the chair of the Science Working Group.

2.3 Action 1; Targeted visits

The main idea from the proposal is still very valid. The implementation could be to visit national astronomy meetings in countries that have an active astronomy community, but little activity in radio astronomy. Alternatively, colloquia at astronomical institutes could be envisaged, probably reaching a smaller audience, but allowing longer talks. Typically, talks should have 50% (own) science results and 25% advocating general RadioNet facilities, including the ALMA and SKA, leaving room to highlight results from a particular RadioNet facility.

With a typical contribution towards such a trip of 500€, we propose that 8 such trips can be made. Countries that could be targeted include Croatia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Israel, Romania, Belgium, Czech, Greece, Serbia, Austria and Switzerland. After running an inventory of possible target meetings and places, these should be advertised

across the RadioNet scientists, asking for volunteers to sign-up for specific destinations. The programme committee will decide on the actual implementation.

2.4 Action 2; Radio-astronomers at non-radio meetings

In this action we try to address the issue that (probably because of our busy travel too much already) we tend to limit our visits to meetings within our community ('ghetto meetings'). It is of vital importance to share our results in the wider astronomy community, but it is not easy to monitor or even steer this process.

As a first step we can simply advertise the existence of another 4000€ for visits to conferences and workshops outside of the normal radio pathways. It remains to be seen whether such an open call will be effective in making an appearance at many different events.

Alternatively, RadioNet3 could start a register of meetings and representation. In such a register one could maintain a list of all meetings and conferences and try to monitor what level of representation or participation is needed. Where a need is identified, scientists from across all of RadioNet could be prompted to attend the meeting and register a contribution. The problem is that this only works if all major RadioNet facilities would keep a local register of conference participation, needed to make a more global inventory. Although JIVE does this, I would be surprised if the majority of institutes could provide such information regularly.

The proposal is therefore to make an open call and have the programme committee decide on this.

2.5 Action 3; A combined science portal

Currently all RadioNet3 facilities have their own web sites that list capabilities, proposal procedures and science results. The RadioNet3 web page has a focus on the project and programme aspects of the network. It will take anybody quite some efforts to find the TNA programme and the associated observing options. Without changing any of the above, it would be really useful to maintain a joint RadioNet3 portal that compares and list the characteristics of our wide range of facilities. It should really aim to enable direct advertising of the facilities for astronomy and present examples of recent results and papers. Potentially this is also the place to communicate other user aspects of RadioNet (ERIS schools, meetings).

Problem with this suggestion is that this activity has no resources in the RadioNet3 project description and in fact it may require a longer and wider commitment than the current project as well. Moreover, it would probably not even have been a good idea to put such work in a funding proposal, as it may be viewed as an operational responsibility of the facility operators, which the EC tends not to honour for funding.

Maybe it could be discussed in a wider context whether such an initiative is worthwhile. In particular a combined portal for the RadioNet TNA facilities has been considered by the synergy effort in ERATec (WP6). In the current budget proposal for QueSERA there is some room for contributing to a central web facility together with other sources of funding if that were deemed desirable.

2.6 Conclusions

The following actions are proposed:

1. Establish a programme committee
2. Make an inventory of places and events where a RadioNet talk could be given
3. Advertise within RadioNet the possibility to sponsor attendance of non-radio meetings

The document – “A plan for advertising RadioNet facilities to astronomers that traditionally are less involved in Radio Astronomy” has been approved by the RadioNet3 Board at the teleconference on December 14, 2012.

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