

Communique from the telecon of the Interim Board of the European Astrobiology Centre on 11 September 2018

1. Discussions on the Forum

The website of the European Astrobiology Network has been set up and discussion forum has been started as a Google group. Whereas there was great interest (160 registrations) and some interesting threads have been started, there was not so much discussion yet. The Board hopes that the presentations at the EPSC and the EANA Workshop might trigger some more debates.

When the EAI is launched, a more professional website with more information and a more elaborate structure will be implemented. This will have to contain detailed information about core organisations, the participating institutions and the host organisation.

2. Research Infrastructure Grants for Starting and Advanced Communities

There will be two calls for Research Infrastructures, one for Advanced Communities and one for Starting Communities. Europlanet will apply for a Research Infrastructure) Advanced Community Grant (deadline March 2019). It is understood that the EAI will submit a proposal for a Starting Community Grant (deadline March 2020). Therefore, it will be necessary to keep a watershed between the two projects and to take care that there is no excessive overlap (some might be unavoidable) between research projects, infrastructures and field sites for Europlanet and EAI.

3. Administration of the EAI

The Board discussed alternatives for the extent of work that ESF will spend for the administration of the EAI. There are 3 alternatives

Minimum level

- Acting as legal personality of the EAI
- Collecting membership fees from the participating entities
- Assisting in contacts with decision makers
- Assisting with composition of proposals for the funding of the EAI

Personnel requirement

Science Officer	10%
Administrator	10%

Medium level:

- Acting as legal personality of the EAI
- Collecting membership fees from the participating entities
- Assisting in outreach and dissemination work
- Assisting in contacts with decision makers
- Assisting with composition of proposals for the funding of the EAI
- Design of website

Personnel requirement

Science Officer	20%
Communication Officer	20%
Administrator	10%

Maximum level

- Acting as legal personality of the EAI
- Collecting membership fees from the participating entities
- Assisting in outreach and dissemination work and production of material
- Production of newsletter and other dissemination materials
- Assisting in contacts with decision makers
- Assisting with composition of proposals for the funding of the EAI
- Design and administration of website

Associated costs

Personnel requirement

Science Officer	35%
Communication Officer	30%
Administrator	20%

Organisation of meetings is not included since the cost of this can vary a lot. Any budgets for that end will have to be decided on a day-to day basis.

4. Future General assemblies

Launch meeting/General Assembly, Spring 2019

The first General Assembly will be held from 28th to 30th May 2019 in Liblice (CZ). The venue is very apt for this kind of event (including electronic voting) and offers very good value for money. The meeting will have the following aims:

- Discussion of the Scientific Programme for the EAI
- Election of the Board including the co-leaders and leaders of the Working Groups
- Decision about the statutes of the EAI (which have to be drafted during the coming year)
- Decision about the General Action Plan for the EAI and the Yearly Action Plans for 2020 and 2021
- Planning the tasks and Activities of the Working Groups
- Presentation of the Europlanet Advanced Community proposal and discussion of the EAI Starting Community Proposal.
- Presenting the EAI to the academic and non-academic world.

5. Presentation of the EAI with MEPs

There will be an event with Members of the European Parliament which will take place in Strasbourg on 13th November 2019. There will be a presentation of Europlanet and we hope we can include some talk about the EAI also.