

Action 1 Directors to provide suitable statistics to the Access Office.

Action 2 J Melnick will accept commission to chair Aristarchos Review Panel and select another two technically competent panel members.

Action 3 A Martín/J Burgos will deliver a document analyzing the different applications forms as well as the guidelines for the development of a joint user interface before February 2005 .

Action 4 J Davies to discuss payments structure with Executive Committee

Action 5 J Davies to investigate the contractual issues about breaking the link with user fees and travel grants in time for the next Medium Telescope meeting. The objective would be to have a clear set of guidelines by the time of the next allocation round in early summer and fully understand the alternatives and consequences.

Action 6 M Dennefeld, R Gredel and B Gelly appointed to conduct mid-term Access office Review. J Davies to clarify dates of next Board meeting in order to refine this timescale.

Action 7 J Davies to make proposals for programme review.

Action 8 J Davies to remind people to update their instrument plans

Action 9 J Davies to investigate if some allowance for infrastructure upgrades could be built into a user fee model for FP7.

Action 10 J Davies to check with G Gilmore regarding circulating I3 reports

Action 11 J Davies, M Dennefeld, B Nordstrom to come up with plan for next Medium Telescope meeting.

OPTICON Progress

- Generally all going very well. No obvious problems in any major activity. Possible networking underspend of 250,000 Euro.
- Executive meeting next week to review JRA and Access office Report
- Board Meeting in October to formalise budgets and plans for 2006/7.

Financial Summary (1)

- First 18 month request to EU contained request for 10% of expected user fees
- EU advanced 80% of project wide request
- Project advanced money to JRA and Networks, not telescope operators
- Some specific contractors (AAO, NOTSA, Themis, RSAS, KIS, DOT) received partial payments in late 2004.

Financial Summary (2)

1st Annual report submitted April.

EU feedback entirely on financial pages

Long delay getting relevant forms resubmitted by some contractors.

Resubmitted a few days ago, hoping for approval this time.

Next payment to OPTICON

100% of actual spend +80% of projected 2005/6 spend – cash in hand

Financial Summary (3)

- All 2004 user fees and estimated 2005 user fees included in 1st annual report
- Once the money reaches Cambridge it is in principle available to the contractors
- If you are a contractor (eg Themis) ask project office for the money.
- If you are not a contractor (eg OHP) ask your agency to request the money and transfer it to you.

Financial Summary (4)

GG insists

- 1) Most contractors have asked for user fees only in arrears to avoid liabilities.
- 2) Any contractor who needs money urgently can have it now from small remaining cash reserve
- 3) 2004 user fees can be paid in full once 2nd tranche of money arrives.

Fin

For the moment!

Structuring

- Are we achieving any of our structuring goals?
- Is time swapping necessary or is it superceded by enough access?
- Is there any progress in formulating a coherent instrumentation strategy?
- Can we drive instrument rationalisation via the access programme?
- Does rationalisation require more stick than carrot and can only be imposed downwards?
- Note a new ERANET called ASTRONET is trying to achieve a broad strategic roadmap for astronomy.

Access report: key points

Uptake by CEE countries remains low.

By mid 2005 we have supported no-one from:
Poland, Baltic States, Bulgaria, Romania, Eire

And three or less from:

Greece, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Denmark,
Hungary, Isreal, Sweden, Chile(!), Isreal,
Sweden

Access report: key points

To understand this, and propose solutions, we need to know pressure factor from these countries. ie for each telescope:

1. Number of qualifying applications
2. Number which passed peer review (if this is meaningful)
3. Number scheduled
4. Number actually supported

How is this best done? Can it be done before the board meeting in late October?

Access report: key points

Uptake at ESO low (but special circumstances here). What can be done?

Aristarcos now more than 1 year behind schedule and LT has not scheduled any qualifying proposals.

This represents 40K + 5K of unspent user fees.
What shall we do?

Access report: key points

40% of nights used but only 20% of travel budget spent.

If this continues potential for ~ 200 K saved

1. More support for users (2 per trip)
2. More telescope nights

20 * 4m

or 100 * 2m

What is our priority?

Strategy for 2006/7

- Shall we ask the board for an increase in the Access programme budget to allow us to allocate more ‘nights?’
- Do we want to rebalance the network by switching ‘nights’ to the most oversubscribed telescopes or to specific telescope/instrument combinations?

Strategy for FP7