OPTICON Trans-National Access

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A refreshed telescope suite with distributed and robotic facilities

All time allocated on scientific merit
via Common Time Allocation Committee.

OPTICON Telescope Directors Meeting,
May 2019

Philosophy

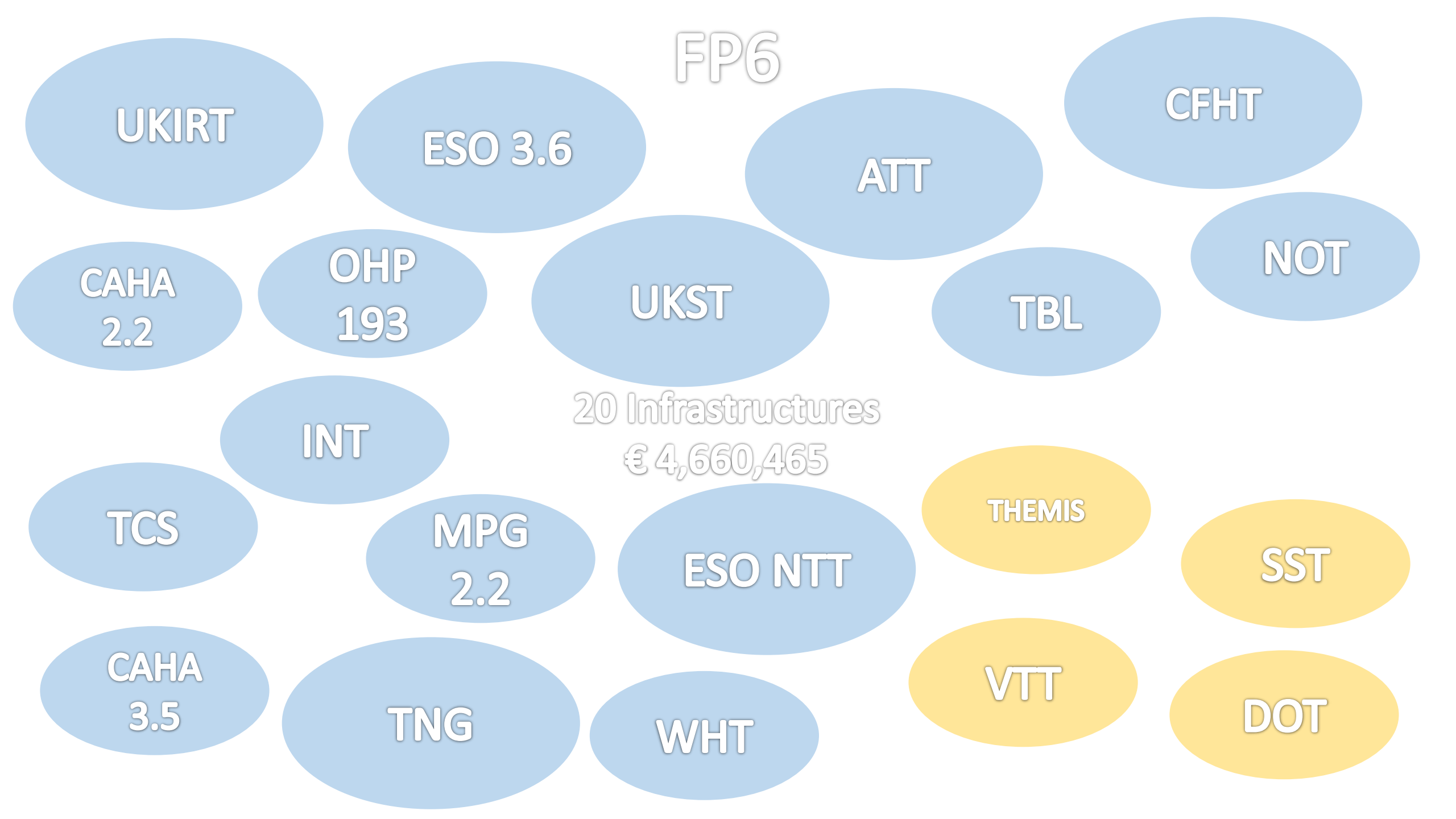
- Use a single OPTICON TAC comprising 7 different nationalities allocating time across whole network using a single proposal system .
- Rank projects in science merit order and allocate time until the resources available for that semester runs out.
- Give successful qualifying applicants travel support.
- Telescopes receive ‘user fees’ based on user demand, not pre-defined quotas. The user fees follow the best science.
- Budget ~2M Euro over 4 years, 250K Euro per call

Proposals and Allocations

2017B	16/55
2018A	17/45
2018B	12/52
2019A	20/45
2019B	21/63
Total Proposals	86/260

Evolve or Die!

- FP5 > H2020. Networks vanish and new ones start
- FP5 > H2020 Partners/Contractors/ Beneficeries change
- 2010B Switch to common TAC
- FP7 -1 Transfer Access Office Tasks to Project Office
- H2020 Add TNA for JRA (Canary AO testbed at WHT)
- FP5 > H2020 Telescope Network Evolves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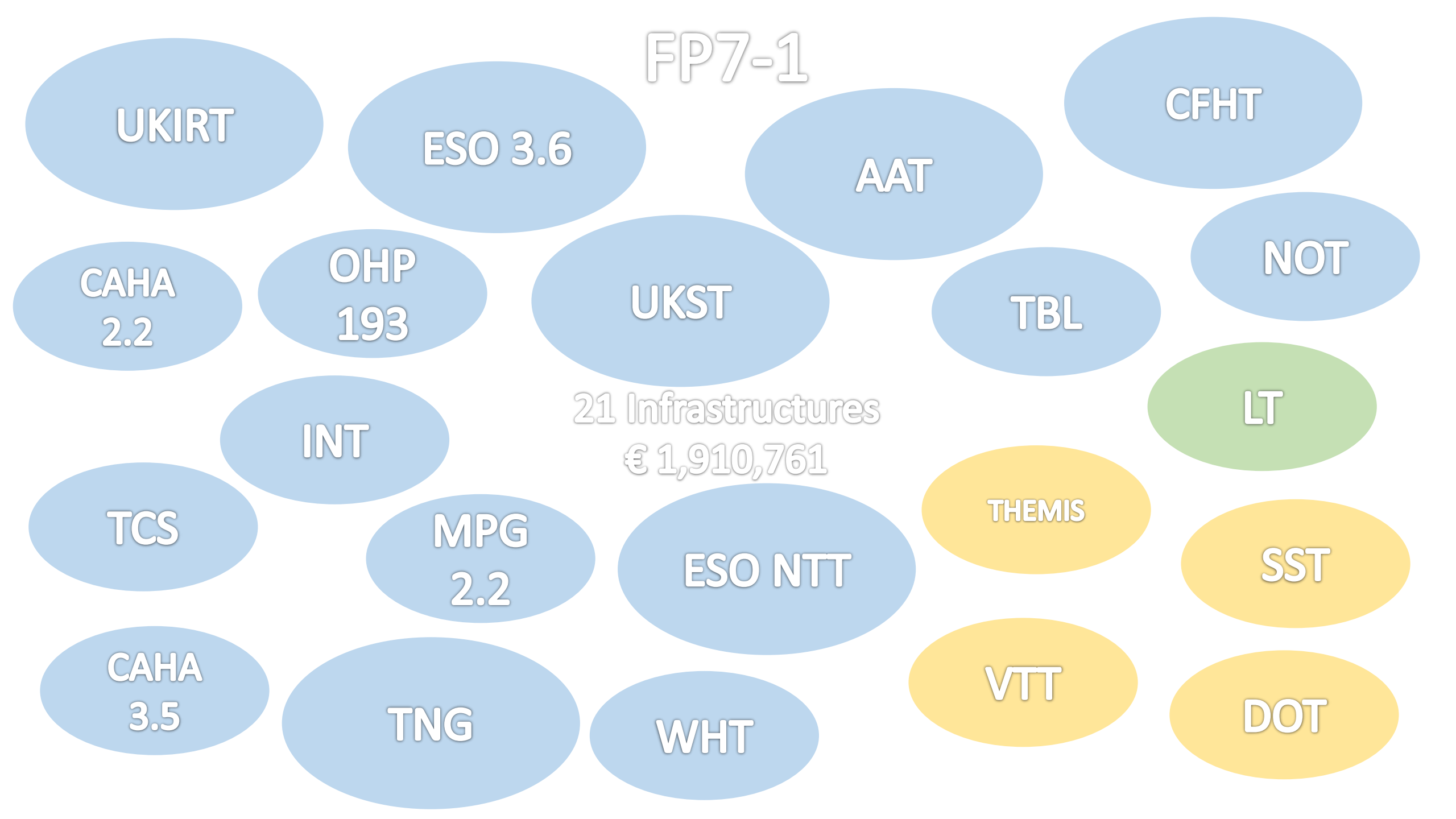
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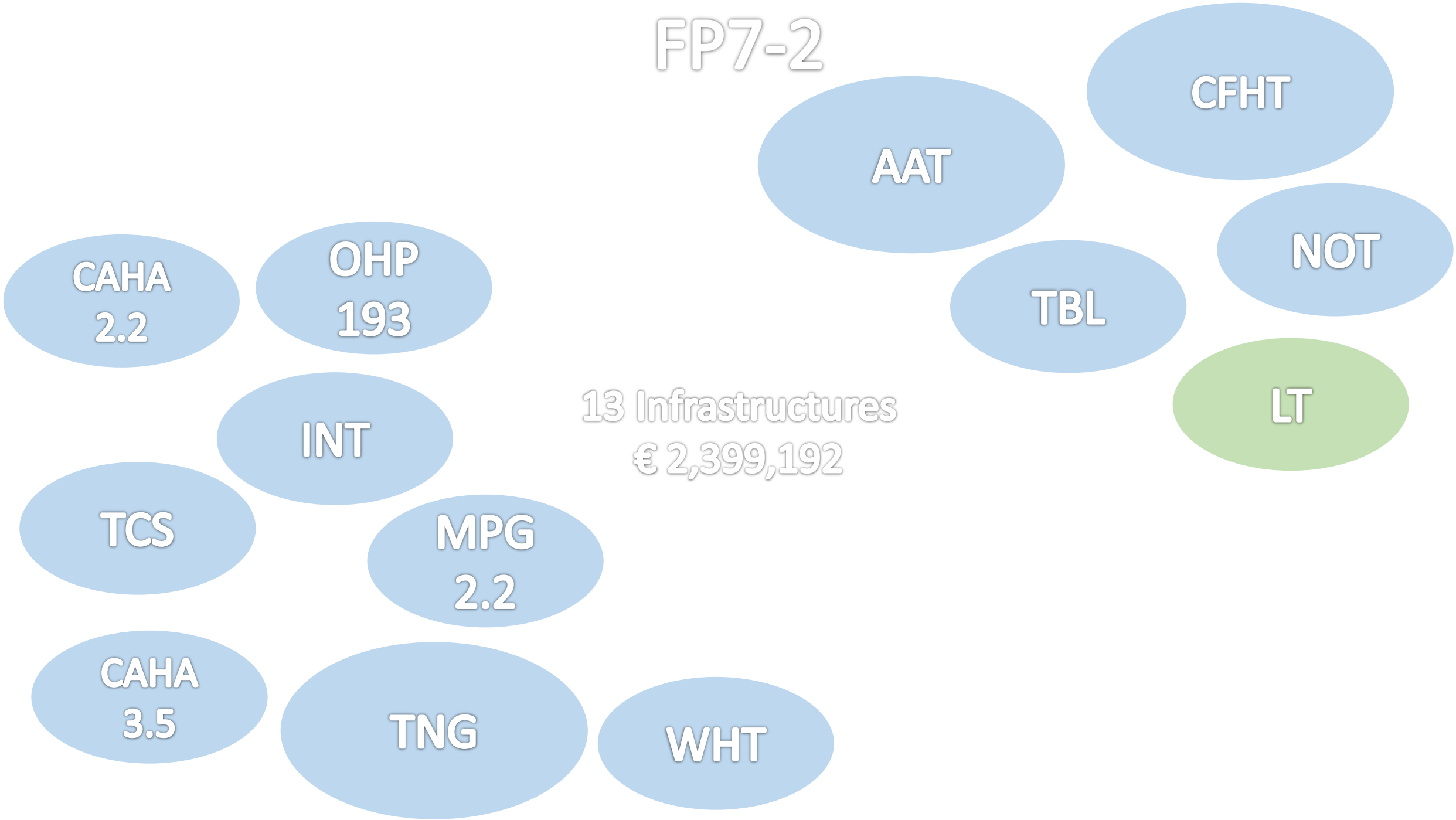
FP7-2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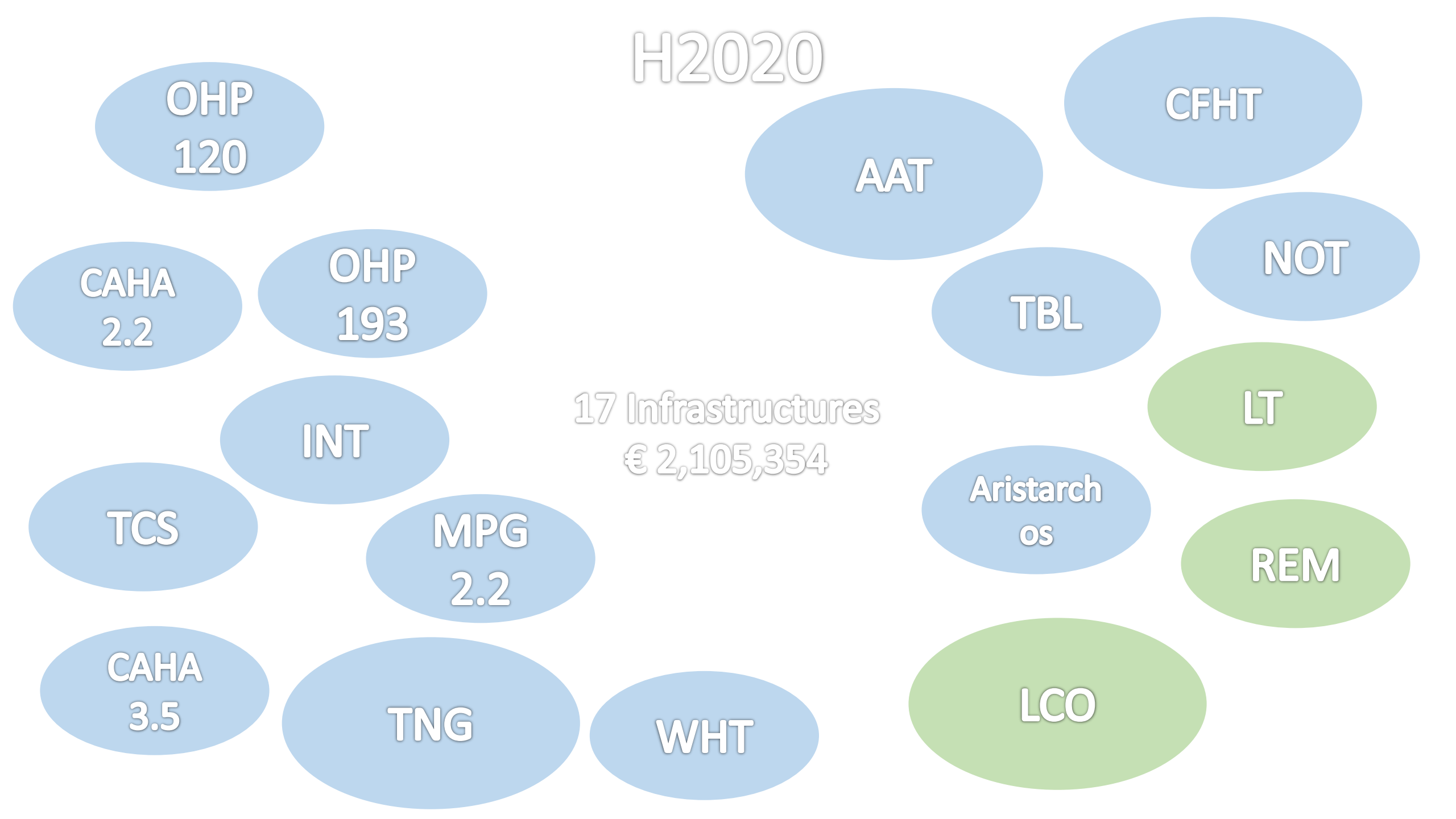
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Evolve or Die!

Follow the Money

Potential new budget for OPTICAL TNA= 4500 K euro over 4 years

= 2.25 x the OPTICON H2020 TNA

~ 80 projects per year

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=100N/year of 4m time (0.3 telescope)
= 450N/year of 2m time (1.5 telescopes)
= 4000hr/year of Robotic time (1 telescope)

or about 5% of the annual budget for each telescope.
This is not a life changing sum of money for business as usual.

Zero-order questions

- What do the telescope managers and agencies want
- Which outcomes can we reasonably achieve?
- Should we continues with classical PI driven TNA?
- What are the trends? – More Time domain, more overrides, more survey followup, bigger teams
- What is the correct telescope suite (incl new and existing facilities) for both radio and OPTICAL?
- What software tools do we need?
- Which technology projects can benefit from TNA?
- What is the overlap with small communities/citizen science.

What are the EU proposal requirements?

- Provision of Access to world class infrastructures
- Physical and virtual access
- Harmonisation of procedures for giving access
- Optimum integration of services for similar communities
- Data management and advanced computing
- Develop a plan for long term sustainability without EU funds
- Take account of global initiatives and ESFRI plans
- Widen communities and link academia and industry

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

- Provision of Access to world class infrastructures.

Easy, many of our telescopes are already world class

- Physical and virtual access

We have physical access mechanisms, including rem-obs, in place.

Virtual Access. Not really available for small optical telescopes.

Archives of are different qualities. Better archiving (reduced data, ease of access to calibration tools) is desirable.

Standardised Data reduction pipelines and outputs?

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

- Harmonisation of procedures for giving access

Common proposal requirements- feasible (Phase 1 and Phase 2 options?)

Common proposal tool- probably undeliverable

Common proposal gateways- possible

Common rules for proprietary periods- possible

Simplified Quick Response/Fast Turnaround modes applicable to many facilities -desirable

Ability to request several facilities in one proposal (eg HST/Chandra) – desirable and possible

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

Questions on Harmonisation

How many overlapping radio-mm-wave-optical proposals are there?

To what extent do people do true multi-messenger astronomy?

What are the overlap areas? Transients, GW, GRBs

Is there any appetite for co-ordinated proposal tools?

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

- Optimum integration of services for similar communities.

What services are common to Optical and Radio observatories?

Are staff sharing/exchange visits realistic models? (JAC, ORM)

Are there real savings/efficiencies to be made?

- Data management and advanced computing.

Pipelines and protocols for small telescopes willing to enter networks.

Standardise Archive and Curation tools from facility to facility

Computing power clearly an issue for VLBI, LOFAR,SKA etc

Good calibrations and visualisation tools add legacy value to observations.
CADC, ALMA

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

- Take account of global initiatives and ESFRI plans

Will happen automatically, the next generation infrastructures in astronomy are already defined.

- Widen communities and link academia and industry.

Not an obvious role for TNA, except in Data processing

How do the Eu requirements map onto what we do/what we want?

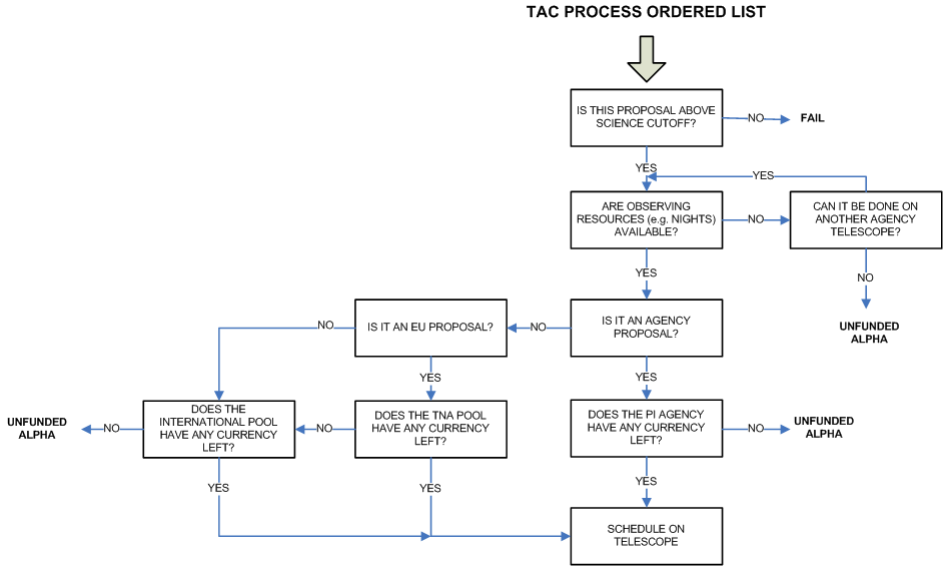
- Develop a plan for long term sustainability without EU funds

How do we make our desired outcomes sustainable?

Which of the outcomes will happen anyway?

Sustainability attempts to date.

- 2010 ASTRONET OPTICON Med telescopes panel (ETSRC)
- 2011 Proposed EU wide common process with minimal exchange of funds and tuneable outcomes



- 2019 common Proposal tools conference, multi-messenger conference planned at ESAC (Not by OPTICON)

Beyond the Future

- What happens in Horizon Europe a few years from now?
- Will whatever we do be expandable to other astronomy Communities?

FIN

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