

ELI-NP position regarding the application for ELI-ERIC

We are astonished and, at the same time, indignant to see the announcement on the ELI-DC webpage <https://eli-laser.eu/news/the-extreme-light-infrastructure-passes-key-milestone-to-become-a-european-research-infrastructure-consortium/> that the Czech and Hungarian pillars of the ELI project have formally applied to the European Commission to establish the new, pan-European organization known as the Extreme Light Infrastructure ERIC (ELI ERIC). Such an action is unfair, not transparent, and does not reflect the scope and the spirit of ELI-DC and of the collaboration among the three countries to implement together the ELI project.

The submittal of Step 2 without ELI-NP is, first of all completely unjustified, both legally and ethically and severely affects Romanian interest considering at least the political agreement in December 2018, the Step 1 submittal when ELI-NP was one of the founding members, together with the other two ELI pillars, the EC Decisions requiring all three countries to be part of ELI-ERIC and Romania's huge investments in ELI Project and commitment expressed already since the beginning to be part of ELI-ERIC.

ELI-NP was all the time and still is committed and ready to enter ELI-ERIC:

- A. From scientific and technical point of view ELI-NP is on similar level, in complementary and synergy, with the other two pillars in terms of capacity to gradually provide users with infrastructure facilities. The buildings and laboratories are already ready and the main equipment, High Power Laser System 2x10 PW as well as the corresponding experimental set-ups are available to the entire international scientific community. The other big equipment, Variable Energy Gamma Beam, to be used by the nuclear physics community, will be operational in December 2022.
- B. From the point of view of acquiring and assuming the ELI-ERIC documentation, ELI-NP and Romania submitted Step 1 application to ELI-ERIC and there is no reason to remove Romania in Step 2. ELI-NP has worked on all the documentation for step 2 and completed it together with the other two pillars.

The spirit of ELI-DC establishment under the coordination of DG Research was to strengthen the collaboration between the three pillars and to gather the European scientific community round the unique and most complex pan-European research facility, totally opposite than the way it acts these days. On the contrary, such an action does not respect the purpose and the mandate for which ELI-DC was established.

The goal of ELI-DC is to contribute to the integration of the three pillars rather than their separation. By this action ELI-DC attempts to isolate ELI-NP from the European scientific community, and breaching of all devotions and assumptions of the Competitiveness Council in 2009. At the same time, claiming that ELI-ERIC without ELI-NP has the same qualities, performances and potential is groundless and does not correspond to the scientific and technical reality. ELI-NP has a lot of potential to bring to ELI-ERIC in all respects and any correct review could easily agree with that. There is absolutely no real reason for not having ELI-NP founding member of ELI-ERIC.

Being conscious that is also in our common interest for strengthening and promoting the European Research Area values we are asking the application for Step2 to be withdrawn and to be resubmitted having all three ELI pillars as founding members.

We are ready, as constantly underlined, to participate to the establishment of ELI-ERIC and to host it as well, as it was established in December 2018 by Research Commissioner Moedas with the Research Ministers from Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania, as well as to make available ELI-NP facility to the whole European scientific community.

We are confident that, in consideration of the real facts and good faith, the atmosphere of fair collaboration among the three pillars will be restored.

Management of ELI-NP

May 16th, 2020