

<b>Work package number</b> <sup>9</sup>	WP4	<b>Lead beneficiary</b> <sup>10</sup>	8 - ASTRON
<b>Work package title</b>	ERIC scope: The International LOFAR Telescope		
<b>Start month</b>	1	<b>End month</b>	36

**Objectives**

Carry out an assessment, to be presented in a discussion document for the JIVE and ILT governing bodies and stakeholders, of the possible merits and pitfalls of a closer operational alignment of these two facilities, and possibly their merging into one ERIC.

**Description of work and role of partners**

**WP4 - ERIC scope: The International LOFAR Telescope** [Months: 1-36]  
**ASTRON, JIV-ERIC**

Background. Scientifically and organisationally there are a number of similarities between the European VLBI Network and the International LOFAR telescope. Both run a distributed international telescope network and both rely on a central facility for correlation, data curation, quality control and user interfaces. With the aim of optimising the governance for long-term sustainability, we propose to research if there are advantages in lining up the organisations more closely.

Task 1. Assessment studies. There will be a single task to carry out two assessment studies, with documents to be made public at the end of the project, to evaluate the overlaps/similarities as well as differences between JIVE and ILT. Each document will start from a description of the current status and then assess how changing internal and external circumstances (national, European, and international) may alter the respective positions of JIVE and ILT in the next decade; the associated opportunities, challenges, and risks will be discussed. Each document will conclude with a study of the possible advantages and risks that specific collaborations between JIVE and the ILT would entail, including a full merger of the two entities into a combined ERIC.

1. The first document will focus on the operational model and core technologies employed by the respective facilities. It will first describe the current modus operandi. The document will then proceed to explore the likely evolution and enhancement paths of the respective facilities. These will be required in order to stay abreast of expanding technological capabilities as well as growing scientific end-user needs, particularly within the European landscape. The document will conclude with an analysis of the advantages and risks in bringing the JIVE and ILT operational models and technological efforts more closely into alignment.
2. The second document will focus on institutional partnerships, financing, and governance models. It will first clearly describe the current governance and partnerships of the respective facilities. The document will then explore plausible national, European, and international developments in the next decade with regard to funding and collaboration on operating large-scale research facilities in radio astronomy, keeping the ESFRI priorities in mind. The document will assess the possible places and roles of our facilities against the evolution of research infrastructures. Taking into account in particular the substantially overlapping membership of JIVE and the ILT and the ambitions of both organisations to grow (in part) by acquiring new partners in Europe, the document will conclude with an analysis of possible advantages, risks, and challenges, of aligning the JIVE and ILT governance and financing models, including the discussion of a full merger scenario.

Several intensive meeting sessions or workshops will be required to carry out the studies and the development of the documents described above. The workshops will initially involve relevant operational and general management staff from the respective organisations, followed by a meeting with representation from governing bodies; experts from similar European or international (prospective) partner facilities will also be invited. It is to be expected that external technical and legal/financial experts will be called upon as needed to ensure thorough assessments. One or more of the meetings will probably be held in Brussels, where relevant experts from the EC will be invited to share their insight based on specific prior communication with them.

Finally, the documents will be presented and discussed in the JIVE Council, and in the ILT Board and the national LOFAR consortia. This will be the culmination and conclusion of this work package. It will be up to these governing entities to decide whether to take any further actions, and if so, what, when, and how. A possible follow-up is outside the scope of this work package

WP Leader: ILT/ASTRON (René Vermeulen)

**Participation per Partner**

Partner number and short name	WP4 effort
1 - JIV-ERIC	4.60
8 - ASTRON	6.00
<b>Total</b>	10.60

**List of deliverables**

Deliverable Number <sup>14</sup>	Deliverable Title	Lead beneficiary	Type <sup>15</sup>	Dissemination level <sup>16</sup>	Due Date (in months) <sup>17</sup>
D4.1	Workshops boards discussing position papers	9 - ILT	Report	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	16
D4.2	Workshops with external experts	9 - ILT	Report	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	30
D4.3	Final documents	9 - ILT	Report	Public	35

**Description of deliverables**

<p>D4.1 : Workshops boards discussing position papers [16] Workshops with board representatives discussing position papers</p> <p>D4.2 : Workshops with external experts [30] Broader-scoped workshops with external experts</p> <p>D4.3 : Final documents [35] Final documents presented and discussed in JIVE council and ILT board</p>
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**Schedule of relevant Milestones**

Milestone number <sup>18</sup>	Milestone title	Lead beneficiary	Due Date (in months)	Means of verification
MS11	Workshop board discussing position papers	9 - ILT	16	Workshop board discussing position papers, noted by JIV-ERIC council and ILT board
MS12	Workshop with external experts	9 - ILT	30	Workshop with external experts, noted by JIV-ERIC council and ILT board
MS13	Final documents	9 - ILT	35	Final documents, approved by JIV-ERIC council and ILT board