

EU-MCRT-Network Basic Constituents, Fundamental Forces and Symmetries of the Universe (ForcesUniverse)

Minutes Contact Person meeting

Trieste, Reading Room, SISSA Library
January 31 – February 1, 2005

Participants: Stefan Vandoren (U. Utrecht), Eric Bergshoeff (Groeningen), Chris Hull (Imperial College), Mathias Blau (U. Neuchâtel), Franco Pezzella (U. Napoli), Emil Nissimov (INRNE- Sofia), Constantin Bizdadea (U. Craiova, Romania), Glenn Barnich (U. Brussels), Roberto Iengo (SISSA, Trieste), Josep Pons (U. Barcelona), Daniela Zanon (U. Milano I), Sergio Ferrara (LNF Frascati), María Antonia Lledó (U. Valencia), P. Marios Petropoulos (Ecole Polytechnique), Paolo Di Vecchia (Nordita, Copenhagen), Antoine Van Proeyen (K.U. Leuven), Mario Tonin (U. Padova), Elias Kiritsis (Ecole Polytechnique), Anna Ceresole (secretary, U. Torino, Torino Politecnico and U. Piemonte Orientale, substituting R. D’Auria and A. Lerda), Dieter Lüst (Coordinator, Munich), Silvia Penati (U. Milano Bicocca), Raffaele Marotta (INFN Napoli), Kelly Stelle (Imperial), Alberto Zaffaroni (U. Milano Bicocca), Roberto Pettorino (U. Napoli), Pietro Frè (U. Torino)

Apologies: Riccardo D’Auria, Alberto Lerda, J.-P. Derendinger, Alex Sevrin)

Agenda of the meeting

1. Status of the contract
2. Money transfer
3. Newly appointed Network secretary in Munich
4. Upcoming Workshop in Corfu, September 2005
5. Next school(s)
6. Varia
7. Postdoc selection → Toine

1 Status of the contract

The contract was signed by all contractors and by the EC and has started at November 1st, 2004. Dieter hands out copies of the original contract signed in Munich and official forms to each node representative.

There were two requests to change the contract:

- Nikita Nekrasov (IHES) had inquired about modifying some Salaries into Stipends
- Sofia had asked whether one could pay an ER (Experienced researcher) under the financial conditions of an ESR (Early Stage Researcher), taking into account special situations.

In both cases the answer of the EC was negative: no change of contract was allowed as a matter of principle (the Commission was very rigid). Their objection was that the first request would have increased the number of person-months for a node, while the second would have increased the number of post-docs, and none of these is accepted.

2 First Money transfer

We have received the first payment: 80 % of the budget of the first 18 months:

525.146, – Euro

Dieter distributes copies of a table (see attachment) showing the precise portions for each node. The amounts shown refer to MAIN CONTRACTORS. Each node will take care to deal individually with subcontractors and give them amounts according to the tables available from our web page. *Note: there are missing information from Dublin, Torino, Neuchatel, Patras. Therefore, the money transfer is withheld until they provide missing information.*

3 New Secretary

The secretary of the network is now in office and will be in charge for the whole duration of our contract. Please notice her name and e-mail:

Mrs. Stephane Schoonover:
stephane.schoonover@physik.lmu.de

You must ACKNOWLEDGE the RECEIPT of the MONEY to her as soon as you get it! Moreover, she should be addressed for every administrative question regarding our network.

4 Workshop in Corfu

The next workshop will take place in Corfu. The tentative dates are Sunday 18– Saturday 24 September, but you should take into account a possible shift of one day.

The Organizing committee is composed by: ØIannis Bakas, Anna Ceresole, Costas Kounnas, Elias Kiritsis and Dieter Lüst.

The proposed overview speakers for 90 minutes pedagogical talks are:

- R. Dijkgraaf (topological M-theory)
- A. Strominger (black-holes in string theory)
- F. Denef (distributions and statistics of string vacua)
- J.-P. Derendinger (fluxes and gauging)
- T. Damour (string cosmology and/or cosmic superstrings)

Dijkgraaf is still to be confirmed, Damour declined in the mean time, Strominger is very likely to come while Denef and Derendinger have already accepted.

5 Next school

A letter was sent to Luis Alvarez-Gaume asking about the possibility to have the RTN winter school 2006 at CERN, in the month of january or february. Sergio Ferrara will try to extract a positive answer as soon as possible.

For future schools, Utrecht and Valencia are volunteering to organize the school in 2007.

6 Varia

- Trieste School:
 - ⊙ Many thanks to Roberto Iengo and all our colleagues: Matteo Bertolini, Lorian Bonora and Marco Serone from SISSA and Seif Randjbar-Daemi from ICTP . They have organized this school very nicely and productively !
 - ⊙ Forms for evaluation of this school (lecture subjects, lecturers but especially work-groups, that are a new entry) have been distributed and the results will soon be made available.
 - ⊙ The working group leaders of Trieste school are asked to write a brief summary about their working groups (number of participants, format, discussions, outcome, possible collaborations, etc), so that we can use the information to improve in future schools. In particular, superposition between workgroups and network meetings should be avoided in future schools.
- As Munich will kindly give up the overhead money, there will be extra 8122,31 Euros as overhead for organizing conferences or schools
- The Workshop of 2006 (mid-term meeting), to be held in september or october (candidates are Munich, Paris, ...)
- Sofia showed some interest to organize the network conference (2007?)
- Other events, such as working group workshops or common interest events and news should be advertised through posting and linking on our network home-page. String Phenomenology 2005 Conference in Munich during June 13 – 18, 2005
(see <http://wwwth.mppmu.mpg.de/members/blumenha/main.html>);
Workshop in Munich (Arnold-Sommerfeld-center, see <http://www.theorie.physik.uni-muenchen.de>) on dark energy/particle cosmology during October 10 – 14, 2005.
- Stefan Vandoren remarks that, after the completion of the post-doc selection, the responsible person for post-docs should be elected and asked to take care of their home-page.

- In special care of Equal Opportunity issues within our network, there has been a meeting during the school, attended by about 15 woman participants, in order to exchange information, optimize the training, monitor and encourage the growth of this group of researchers.

7 Postdoc selection

Toine leads the discussion for the post-doc selection. He presents the table with the list and highlights of 240 applicants, 70 more than last year, and he explains the procedure. As agreed in the previous meeting in Munich, he has done work in advance to collect the numbers of papers, citations and average citations from SPIRES. Then, each candidate should have been evaluated by two readers among a group of seven readers : Toine, Elias Kiritsis, Pietro Fre, Mathias Blau, Stefano Bellucci, Jean–Pierre Derendinger and Anna Ceresole. Each reader has gone through the letters of recommendation and curricula, and he/she has assigned 1 for really exceptional candidates, 2 for candidates that should be considered and 3 to those lower than average (also half points were considered) . Regrettably, we have not received evaluations from Stefano and Jean–Pierre, so that some extra work has been done in real time at the meeting.

There has been a thorough and long discussion to compile the short (actually not at all short) list of exceptional candidates, and about 10 positions were counted as still available. The interested institutes have considered the list and made their choices, with results shown in the table Institute-Choices.pdf .