

VOTECH Board Meeting

2005-06-28, ESO



AGENDA

Note that the Euro-VO Exec Board has agreed that for the time being the VOTECH Board and the VOTC Board are the same thing. For item (2) we will need to wear both our VOTC and VOTECH hats. The other items are strictly VOTECH business.

- (1) Brief reports from partners
- (2) Relationship of ESA to VOTECH and VOTC (see paper-A)
- (3) VOTECH management process (see paper-B)
- (4) Schedule of meetings
- (5) AOB

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Paper A : Relationship of ESA to VOTECH and VOTC

Andy Lawrence

During the Kyoto meeting I had useful conversations with Christophe Arviset and Pedro Osuna. Peter Quinn has also had discussions with Martin Kessler about Euro-VO participation in general. Here is my understanding of the wider Euro-VO context :

(a) Martin Kessler is on the DCA board.

(b) It has been explained to Martin that projects, not organisations, are represented at IVOA, so there cannot be a special "ESA seat" at IVOA. However Peter has suggested that Peter and Martin Kessler represent Euro-VO on the IVOA Exec. (Note that I am there representing AstroGrid, and Françoise representing France-VO)

(c) The overall Euro-VO Exec is Quinn, Genova, and Lawrence. This is not expected to change for the foreseeable future.

Given this context, here is my proposal for the relation of ESA to VOTECH and VOTC.

(i) We make sure Pedro and Christophe and anybody else relevant at ESA is freely involved in relevant VOTECH DS groups. This is up to Tony and to the DS leads to make this work.

(ii) We invite Christophe to attend TAP meetings. He will not be a member, and so if there is a vote, he won't have one; but he can always attend and so will know what's going on and have some input.

(iii) Creation of a VOTC Board separate from the VOTECH Board is a definite goal, but we can't afford to do this until VOTECH is better underway. We could perhaps tell Martin K that our goal is to set this up "during 2006" ??

Your comments are invited.

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Paper B : VOTECH Management Process

Andy Lawrence

We should discuss and confirm the VOTECH management process following the recent very interesting but sometimes tense discussion. Below is (a) Tony's original 3 models, (b) my email of June 21st summarising the subsequent debate, and (c) Tony's email of June 23rd setting out details of the process following our decision.

TONY's ORIGINAL CHOICES from email of June 10th

1: the DS programme is split into tasks by the DS Lead and assigned to individuals (who are funded by VOTech) within their team; the DS Lead is responsible for monitoring progress on each task, reassigning resources to tasks that are lagging or dropping problematic ones which are peripheral to the planned programme.

2: the DS Lead splits the programme into task groups and assigns a group to each partner; the partner will assign staff to the tasks equivalent to the nominal level that they are funded for within that DS area and will agree to deliver the assigned workload; the partner rep may report interim progress to the DS Lead.

3: the partners nominate what tasks they will carry out each six months during the planning meeting and the DS programme is the sum of those tasks; progress is reported by the partners to the DS Review meeting; the DS Lead writes the Study Report as a summary of the partner work.

MY SUMMARY OF OUTCOME from email of June 21st

Dear all

I should have sent this last week .. following the email debate about VOTECH management, I talked personally to Tony, and had telephone conversations with Françoise, and with Peter. My summary is :

- (i) Formal management arrangements will follow model-3
- (ii) We are deliverables focused. (See <http://wiki.eurovotech.org/bin/view/VOTech/ProjectPlan>)
- (iii) We will keep the six month planning cycle.

We can discuss further what this means in detail, but I think we all agreed now on these core points. I am content that although Tony ideally wanted model-1, he more than anything wanted to

understand what the Board wanted. This was clear, and he is very happy to manage the project on that basis. I am convinced everybody is success oriented. Lets get on with it !

andy

MORE DETAIL : email from Tony June 23rd 2005

Hi all, following on from the adoption of 'option 3' approach to the process, I've put together a full description of the DS management process, as below. I've run it past Francoise since she had the most concerns about the changes I proposed to the process earlier and have incorporated a couple of minor amendments that she suggested. Please review it and indicate if you agree that this fulfils the way you want the project managed.

I have already put this before the DS Leads and received one comment that the steps seemed to involve the DS Leads in lots of pointless effort: that all they do is take the partners' plans, repackage them and re-present them back at the TAP meetings; and that the DS Leads could be left out of the process (formally that is: they would still be involved in consultation about the plans) until after the partners have decided on workplans in the TAP meeting. I have some sympathy with this concern but have suggested that we work with this process and then review it after another one or two stages.

A couple of other areas need process clarification as well: 1) technical processes: cvs coordination, software releases etc; 2) producing the Design Study Reports. I'll work these out with the DS Leads and will forward proposals to you at a later date.

VOtech DS Management Process:

1. Towards the end of a Stage, the DS Leads will consult with the area participants and briefly document: a) what has been achieved in their area over the past period; b) what they believe are the key goals for that area for the next period; c) which partners or collaborations they believe could best tackle which goals. This document will be distributed along with an agenda for their DS Review & Planning (DSRP) area meeting.
2. Before the DSRP meetings, each partner decides what it wants to do within each of the DS areas: this ought to build on what has gone before and take into account the goals set out by the DS Lead and their recommendations for collaborations.
3. The DSRP meeting for each area will consist of: a) presentations and review of work conducted during the preceding Stage; b) discussions about how the partners' plans and DS Lead plans can be merged into a single plan for the DS area while identifying any possible collaborations.
4. After the DSRP meetings, each partner will finalise their plans for each area that they are involved in and distribute their plans to the Project

Manager who will forward them to the DS Leads.

5. When the DS Leads have received all the partner plans for the Stage, they will incorporate them into a single plan for their area. This plan will be distributed to the TAP before their meeting.

6. The TAP will meet to consider and ratify the plans for each DS area, noting where plans might overlap or where further collaborations might be productive.

7. After the TAP meeting, partners and DS Leads will document their final plans on the project wiki.

8. Once all the plans are finalised, the Project Manager will consolidate them to produce a single high-level plan with a few key deliverables from each DS area. This plan will be submitted to the Board for comment and approval before being posted to the wiki.

9. During the Stage, the DS Leads and the Project Manager will monitor progress against goals and the effectiveness of any collaborations. If any changes are seen as desirable, they will be brought to the attention of the partner(s) concerned for possible action.

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All the best,
Tony.