



OPERRA

OPEN PROJECT FOR EUROPEAN RADIATION RESEARCH AREA

**The OPERRA Project:
First Period Main Achievements
Milano, Italia, 28 April 2015**

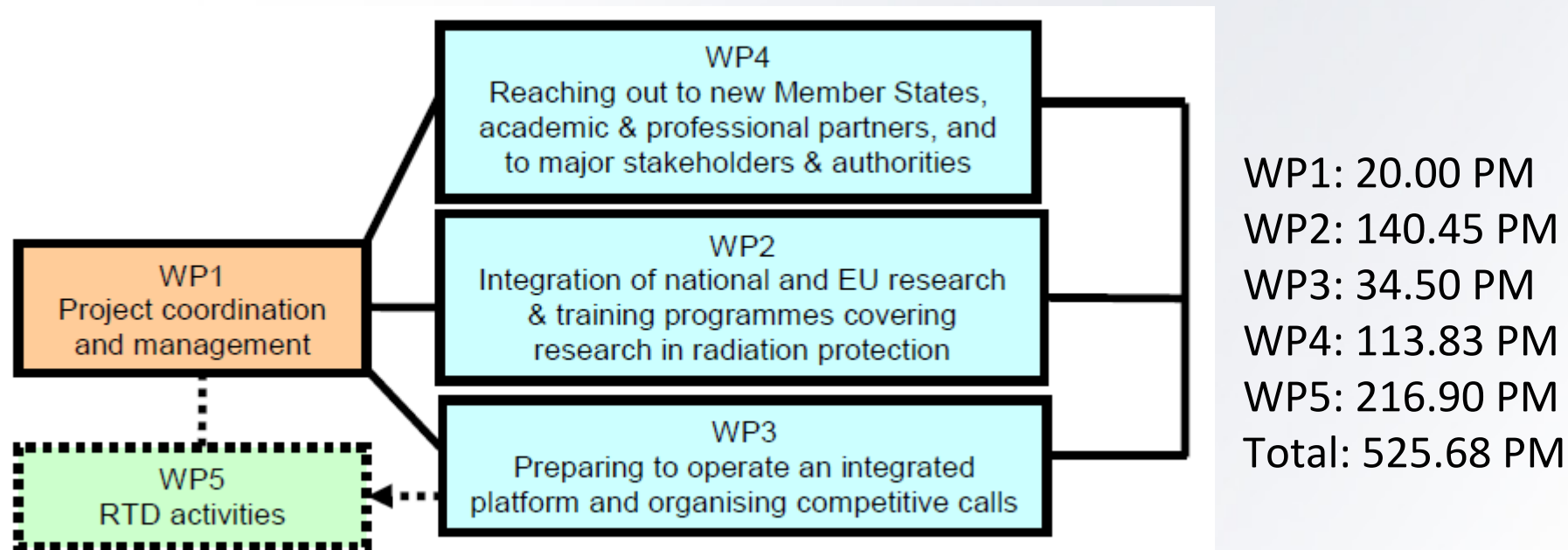
Jean-René Jourdain (IRSN, France)
OPERRA Project Coordinator



Presentation Outline

- First call implementation
- Second call implementation
- Personal views for CONCERT
- Other OPERRA main achievements

OPERRA Work Packages



Duration of the Project: 48 Months (June 2013-May 2017)

WP Leaders: IRSN (WP1), BfS (WP2), MELODI (WP3), STUK (WP4), SCK-CEN (WP5)



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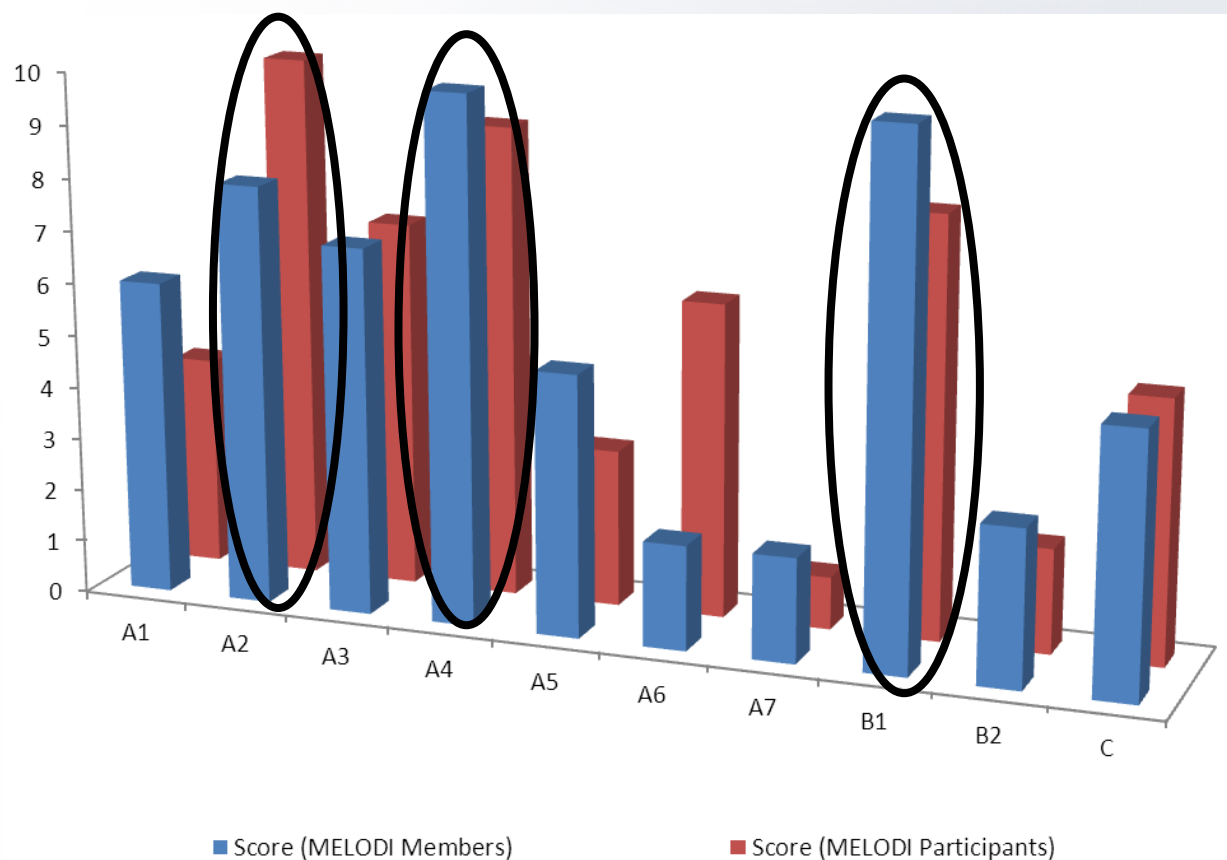
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First Call Implementation



MELODI Priorities Ranking: Procedure

- From the latest version of the MELODI SRA, a MELODI statement listing the 10 highest priorities was prepared and approved by the MELODI Bureau. Altogether, these ten priorities reflected the scope of the SRA (4th version), in a concise formulation
- The list was sent to the 22 MELODI members (as of 1 September 2013) for comments. In addition, MELODI members were invited to select 3 most relevant priorities among the 10 identified from the MELODI SRA. **20 votes were received**
- Also, the participants in the 5th MELODI workshop (Brussels, 8-10 October 2013) were invited to give their opinion by ranking the priorities from 1 (highest relevance) to 10 (lowest relevance). **105 opinions were received**
- To calculate the total score of each priority, priorities ranked #1 received 10 points, priorities ranked #2 received 9 points, etc.
- Selected priorities not explicitly ranked were considered equally as #1
- The priorities were ranked on the basis of the total score calculated



Three topics (A2, A4, B1) emerged as top level priority for a vast majority of the MELODI community

MELODI Workshop Participants Priority Ranking

1

A.2. Analysis of mechanisms involved in low dose radiation through use and development of suitable cellular models (2D, 3D, including somatic cells, stem cells, and organo-typic tissue models) as well as animal models

2

A.4. Role of genetic background, immunological status, age, gender and lifestyle on radiation-induced effects, as well as identification of other factors influencing individual radiosensitivity

3

B.1. Identification, development and validation of biomarkers for radiation-induced health (cancer and non-cancer) effects through sound (molecular, i.e. using most recent methods such as omics, genetic and epigenetic profiling, new generation sequencing and systems biology) epidemiological studies in children and/or adults in conjunction with most suitable and promising retrospective (Techa River, Mayak, Chernobyl, Fukushima, Uranium miners, nuclear workers, secondary cancer patients with radiation therapy in childhood) and prospective (CT scan patients, medical diagnosis patients, new treatment modality RT patients) cohorts with access to biological samples and sound dosimetry



OPERRA First Call Topics

- Analysis of mechanisms involved in low dose radiation through use and development of suitable cellular models (2D, 3D, including somatic cells, stem cells, and organo-typic tissue models) as well as animal models
- Determination of the role of genetic background, immunological status, age, gender and lifestyle on radiation-induced effects, as well as identification of other factors influencing individual radiosensitivity
- Identification, development and validation of biomarkers for radiation-induced health (cancer and non-cancer) effects through sound molecular epidemiological studies in children and/or adults in conjunction with most suitable and promising retrospective and prospective cohorts with access to biological samples and sound dosimetry

Topics selected by the experts were very much consistent with MELODI recommendations



OPERRA First Call at a Glance

- Call specifications were written and evaluations performed by an independent group of experts on the basis of a series of documents provided by MELODI, on behalf of the OPERRA consortium
- To be eligible, consortia should comprise **at least three organizations not belonging to the actual OPERRA consortium, with at least 50% of the requested EC contribution going to non-OPERRA organizations**
- The call was published on 16 December 2013, closed on 14 March 2014, evaluations were achieved on 27 May 2014
- 22 proposals were submitted for a total available budget (EC contribution) of 1.5 M€: among them, **17 were scored above the thresholds, representing altogether a requested EC contribution of 11,8 M€**



OPERRA First Call at a Glance

- The score ranged from 9.0 to 14.0 (for a maximum of 15.0)
- The EC requested contribution per project ranged from 487 k€ to 999 k€
- The project's coordinators were informed of the score on 27 May 2014 and of the possibility to ask for the ESR to the call's administrator
- The final selection was decided on 23 June 2014 and was made on the basis of the ranking list: **the 3 first projects of the list were selected (representing altogether a requested EC contribution of 1.7 M€)** and a decision was made to slightly reduce their budget (decision taking into account the project ranking) to meet the envelope of 1.5 M€
- The coordinators of selected projects were informed on 27 June 2014 (end of the redress procedure period)
- The amendment to the GA was submitted on 30 November 2014



OPERRA First Call: Final Selection

- The 3 selected projects are as follows:
 - SOPRANO: Systems Oriented Prediction of Radiation Risk (+6 new OPERRA partners)
 - EURALOC: European epidemiological study on radiation-induced lens opacities for interventional cardiologists (+11 new OPERRA partners)
 - DIMITRA: Dentomaxillofacial paediatric imaging: an investigation towards low dose radiation induced risks (+3 new OPERRA partners)

→ As of 1 December 2014, the OPERRA consortium comprises 34 partners (including 20 new partners)

- 8 countries newly represented within the OPERRA consortium: Greece, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia



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Second Call Implementation



OPERRA Second Call: Preparation Phase

- Several OPERRA tasks committed:
 - Task 2.1: Identifying key partners involved in RP research, and E&T, and joint programming of research activities in RP: links with MELODI, ALLIANCE, NERIS, EUTERP, EURADOS & EURAMET
 - Task 2.2: Determining joint funding mechanisms for national & EU Fission R&D programs
 - Task 3.3: Supporting the organization of competitive calls for radiation protection research
 - Task 4.3: Reaching out to major stakeholders & authorities
- Numerous meetings held January through June 2014 bringing together OPERRA partners and representatives of MELODI, ALLIANCE, NERIS & EURADOS



OPERRA Second Call: Main Inputs

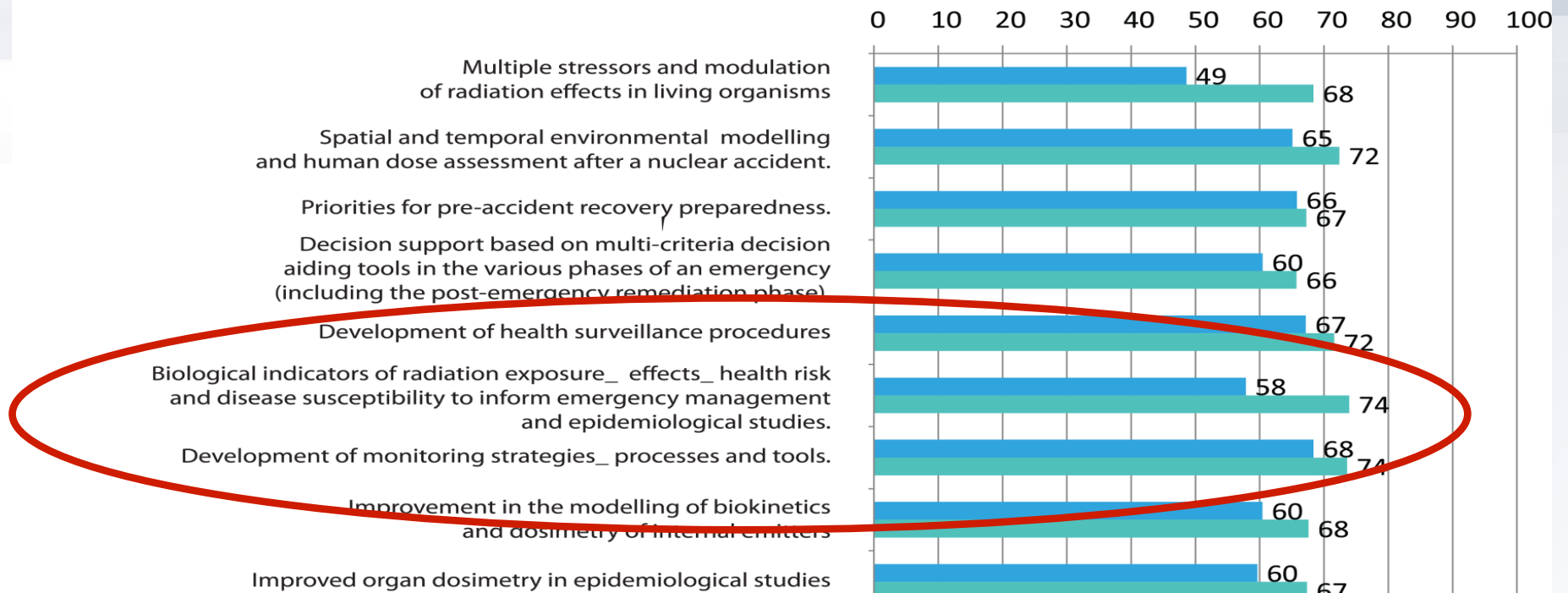
- Task 4.3 partners implemented an e-survey with the objective of collecting views and thoughts of scientific communities working on the 15 identified priorities
- The e-survey, that was addressing also social sciences and communication issues, was opened on 1 July 2014 and closed on 15 September 2014: 274 persons submitted their answers
- A summary of the report analyzing the outcomes of the e-survey has been given to the panel of experts in charge of drafting the text of the second OPERRA call



Methodology for priorities identification

- **Collection of data:** between 1/07/2014 and 15/09/2014
- **Response:** the eSurvey was opened 507 times. 233 times the e-Survey was not submitted and 274 times it was submitted. Only these 274 submissions were taken as valid responses and analysed
- **Respondents:** 120 from MELODI, 119 from EURADOS, 78 from ALLIANCE, 70 from NERIS, 43 submissions from other relevant EC projects and 55 submissions from other stakeholders
- In 86 submissions it was indicated that the respondent belonged to more than one platform or association

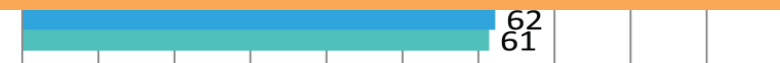
Feasibility and importance of synergistic research topics: average scores (all responses)



The most important:

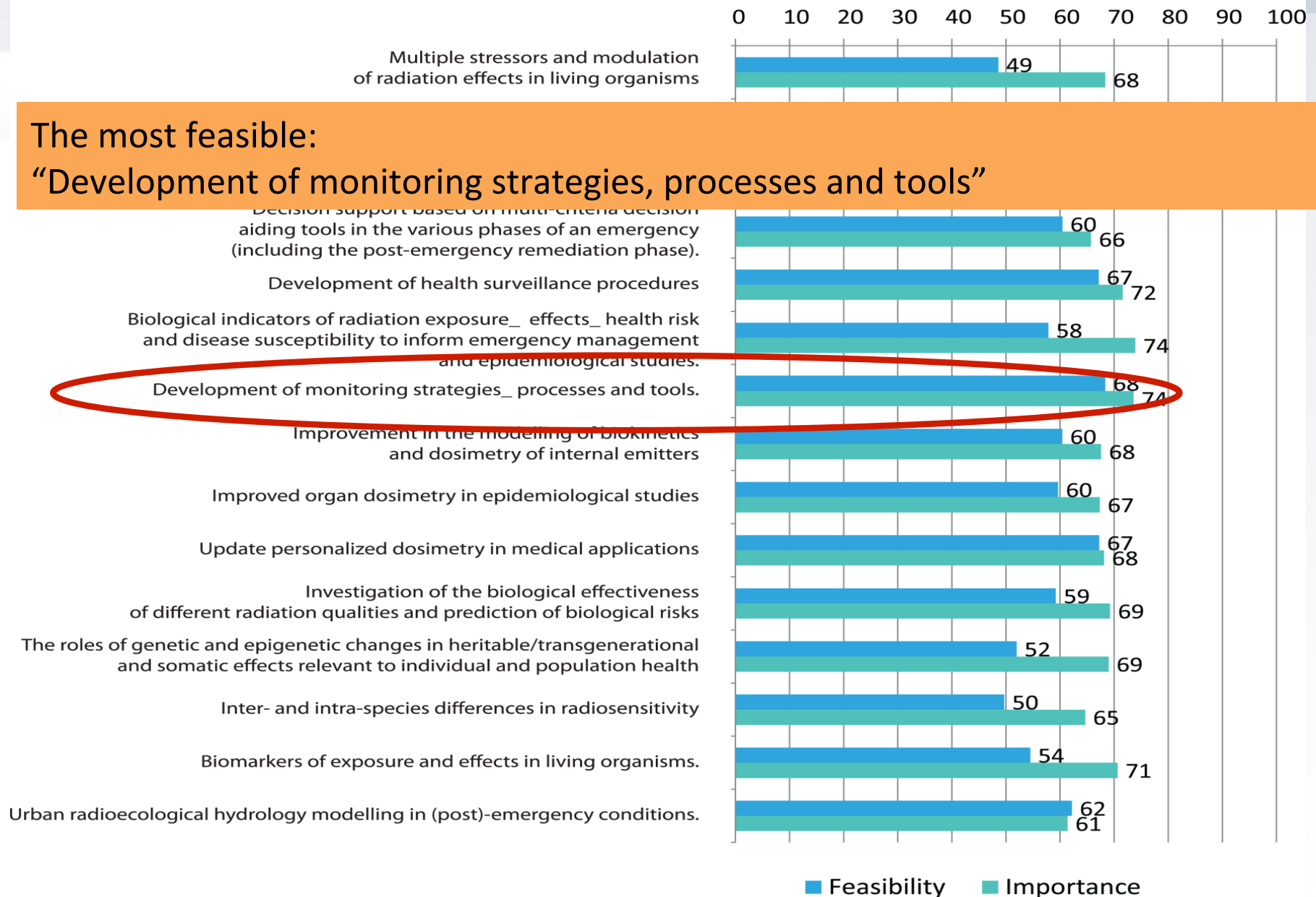
- “Development of monitoring strategies, processes and tools”
- “Biological indicators of radiation exposure, effects, health risk and disease susceptibility to inform emergency management and epidemiological studies”

Urban radioecological hydrology modelling in (post)-emergency conditions.



■ Feasibility ■ Importance

Feasibility and importance of synergistic research topics: average scores (all responses)



The most feasible:

“Development of monitoring strategies, processes and tools”



Topics selected for the second call

- Development of monitoring strategies, processes and tools
- Spatial and temporal environmental modelling and human dose assessment after a nuclear accident
- Development of health surveillance procedures
- Biological indicators of radiation exposure, effects, health risk and disease susceptibility to inform emergency management and epidemiological studies



Minimum conditions

- Eligible consortium should comprise at least **FOUR PARTNERS** from at least **TWO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES** and should include **at least ONE NON-OPERRA PARTNER**
- With a EC contribution of 2.5 M€, it is anticipated **to fund at least one project (MAXIMUM DURATION 18 MONTHS) per topic (MAXIMUM EC CONTRIBUTION 800 k€ PER PROJECT)**, subject to meet the excellence criteria
- Provided that the above minimum conditions are fulfilled, additional participants (**no maximum limit**) may participate in the proposal. Such additional participants can be current OPERRA beneficiaries or external organizations
- One organization may participate in several proposals



Evaluation process

- The proposals received are evaluated using the form shown in Annex 2 of the Guide for applicants, by experts who are independent of any proposer
- Each independent expert will record his/her individual opinion of each proposal first, and then they will communicate together to prepare a “consensus” form for each proposal (=Evaluation Summary Report, ESR)
- On the basis of scores, the proposals are put on a ranking list
- On the basis of ranking list, the OPERRA consortium will select the proposals to be included into the ongoing projects



OPERRA Second Call: Next Steps

- Call text published on **Monday 15 December 2014**
- Applications closed on **Thursday 12 March 2015 at 17:00, Brussels time**
- Letter informing the consortium leader of the project's score sent **on 30 March 2015**
- **19 projects received.** It is anticipated to fund at least one project per topic
- Selection of projects to be funded expected **by end May 2015**
- Consortium leader of selected projects will be invited to enter into negotiations **in June 2015**
- End of negotiations and submission of the second amendment to the OPERRA GA **by 1 December 2015 at the latest**



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Considerations for the CONCERT project

Considerations for future CONCERT calls

- Make the call preparation independent and transparent:
 - The call text shouldn't be written by CONCERT's beneficiaries
 - The CONCERT's beneficiaries have to provide the experts in charge of writing the text call with clear and concise recommendations
- Involve the scientific communities in the preparatory phase of the call:
 - Two options: questionnaire distributed along a workshop or e-survey
 - Whatever the selected option, the questionnaire should be concise and lead to clear decisions not frustrating the respondents
 - Better to ask for a priority short list rather than a ranking process based on a long list of priorities



Considerations for future CONCERT calls

- Involve the scientific communities in the preparatory phase of the call:
 - Think about an initial list of priorities evolving as a function of results/recommendations coming from ongoing/achieved research projects: asking project coordinators to write a “lesson-learnt”/ position paper in terms of research priorities may be a suitable option
- Propose recommendations with regard to minimum conditions for applying the call: need to more clearly define the expectations of the call in terms of scientific content and targeted communities
- Set up a sustainable structure having the capacity to administer the calls and take in charge efficiently administrative issues: shorten as much as possible the negotiation phase

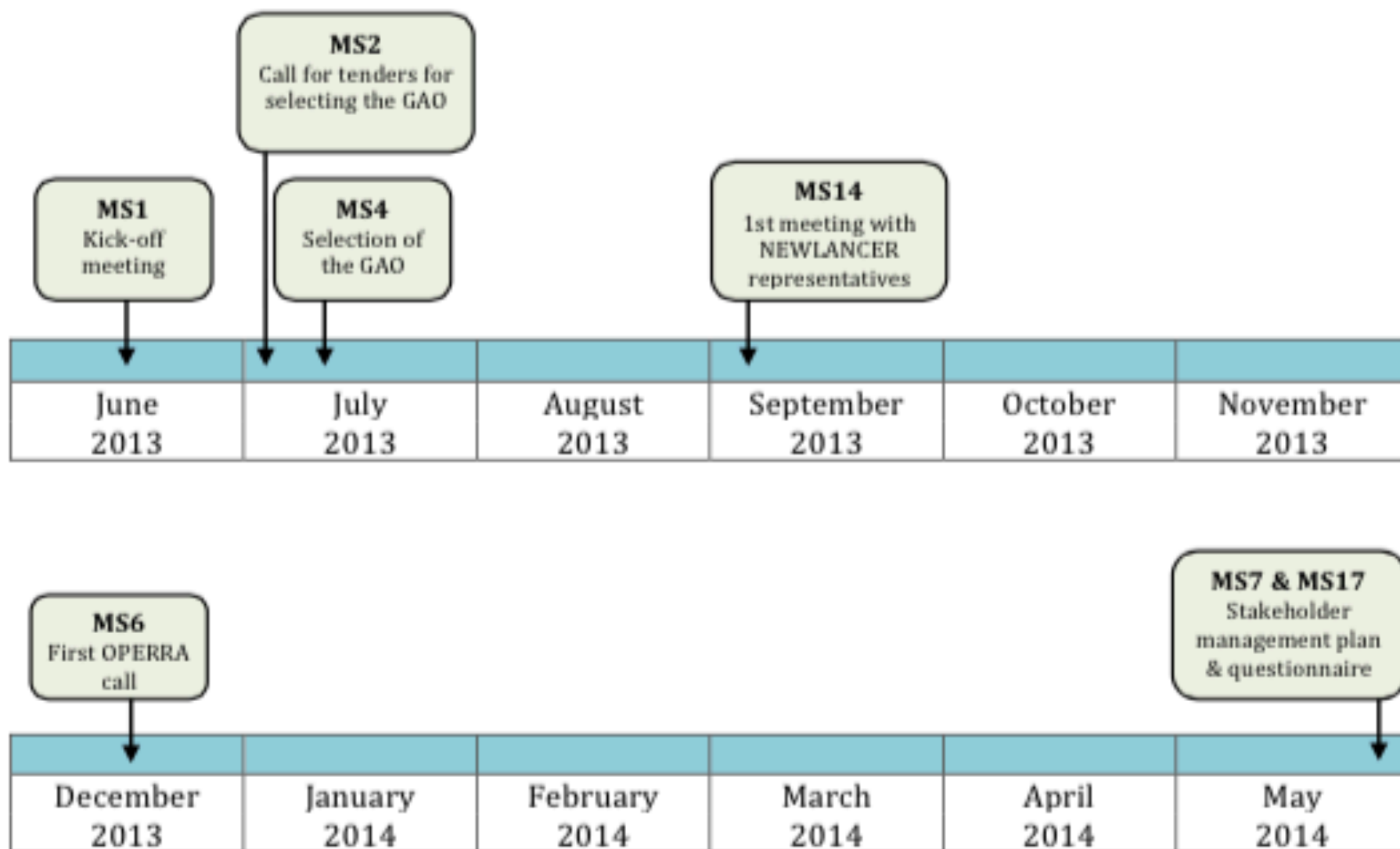


Considerations for future CONCERT calls

- Find a way making more efficient the evaluation phase:
 - Identify candidates able to evaluate independently the proposals
 - Identify candidates still involved in day-to-day research activities
 - Avoid relying on “dinosaur” evaluators only
- Design text call allowing implementation of more ambitious projects in terms of duration (e.g. 4-5 years) and budget (e.g. several M€), and not restrict the call to feasibility studies: scientists need time and money for research
- Be more demanding with regard to project implementation and outcomes (deliverables should serve the community...)

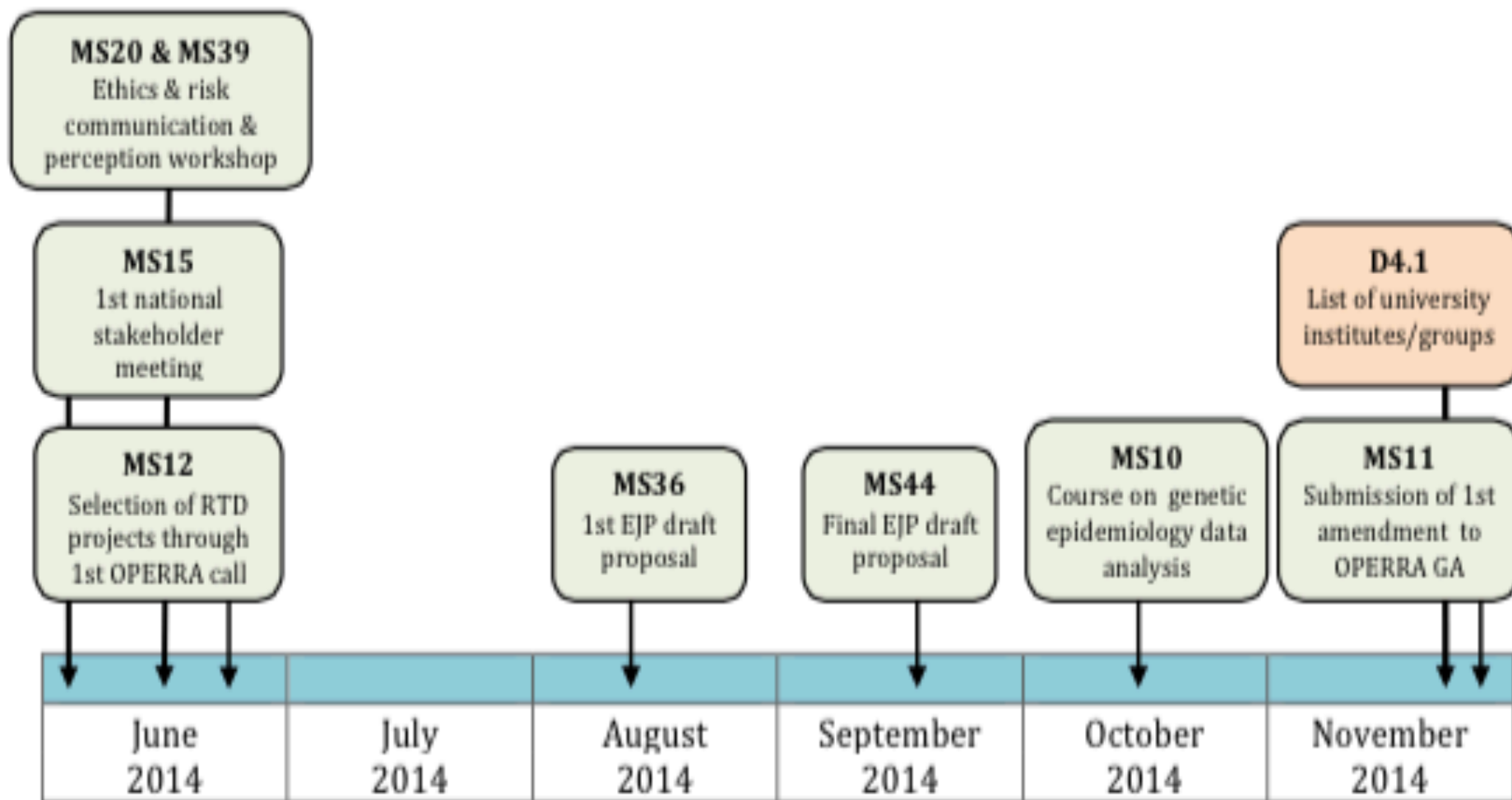


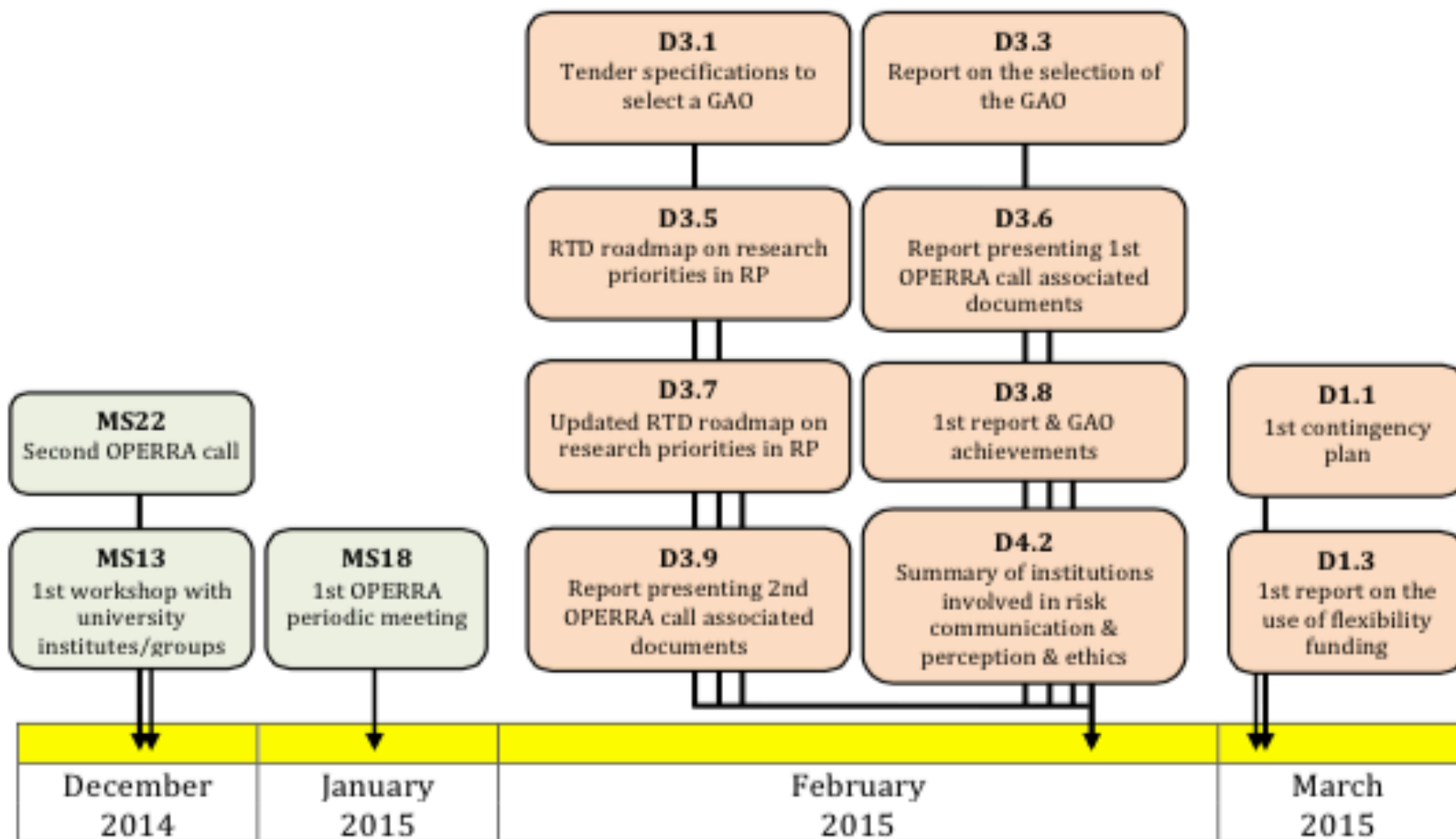
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