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MSCA RISE: What is it like being involved?

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Dr. Branwen Hide
EU Support Officer, STFC
branwen.hide@stfc.ac.uk

MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

Outline

- Intro to STFC
- STFC involvement in RISE
- Proposal development
- Benefits
- Problems we faced
- Things to remember

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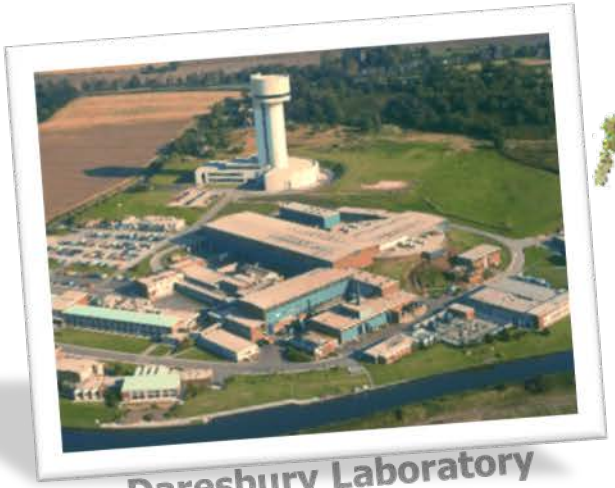
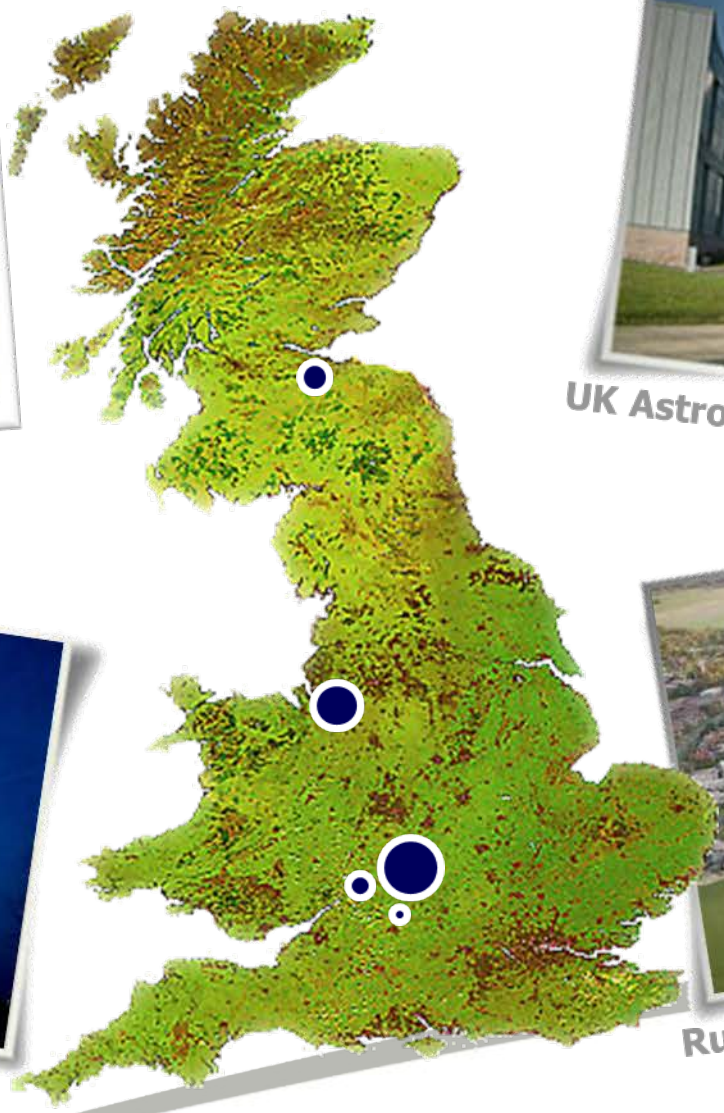
A brief intro to STFC



Daresbury Laboratory



UK Astronomy Technology Centre

Chilbolton Laboratory

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory

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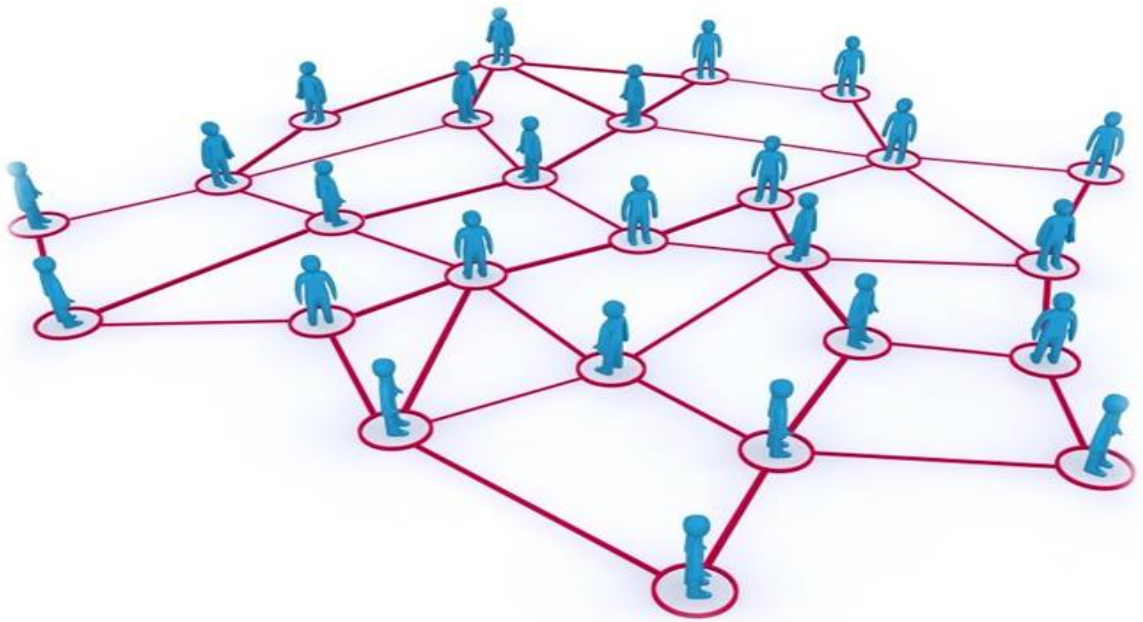
STFC involvement in RISE

- STFC are partners in three projects – ENACT, JENNIFER and TUMOCS – from the MSCA-RISE-2014 calls
- All are very different, but they had something in common:

➢ **A clearly defined and strong research project**



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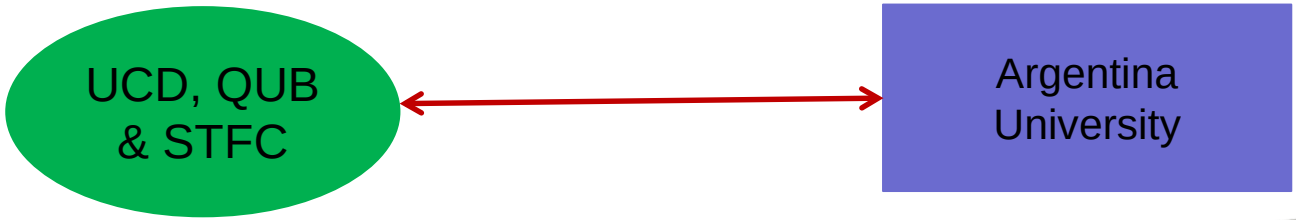
ENACT

"Enhancing sustainable chemical technologies through the synergy of computer simulation and experiment"

The main aim of the ENACT project is to combine computer simulation with materials synthesis and experimental characterization to optimize the design of liquid-phase systems for chemical technologies.

- 3 beneficiaries (Academic & Research Organization)
  - University College Dublin & Queens University Belfast (Ireland) and STFC (UK)
- 1 partner organizations (Academic)
  - National University of Cuyo (Argentina)
- Grant Amount
  - 670,500 EUR (Total 149 PM, STFC 6 PM)



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JENNIFER

"Japan and Europe Network for Neutrino and Intensity Frontier Experimental Research"

JENNIFER aims at jointly investigating the quark and lepton flavour structure of the standard model of particle physics through participation in world-leading facilities managed by KEK, the national Japanese laboratory for particle physics:

- 12 Beneficiaries (Academic & Research Organization & SME)
  - Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (Italy) Deutsches Elektronen Synchrotron (Germany), Austrian Academy of Sciences (Austria), Institute of Nuclear Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences (Poland), Charles University (Czech Republic) , Josef Stefan Institute (Slovinia), Middle East Technical University (Turkey), Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (France), Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique aux Energies Alternatives (France), Instituto de Fisica de Altas Energias (Spain), Narodowe Centrum Badan Jadrowych (Poland), Queen Mary University of London (UK), STFC (UK), Costruzioni Apparecchiature Eletroniche Nucleari (SME: Italy)
- 1 partner Organization (Academic)
  - High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK; Japan)
- Other – Regional Coordinators/Hubs
  - DESY – represents 4 German Universities
  - QMUL - represents 2 other UK Universities
  - STFC - represents 5 other UK Universities
- Grant Amount
  - 2,308,500 EUR (Total 513 PM, STFC 38 PM)

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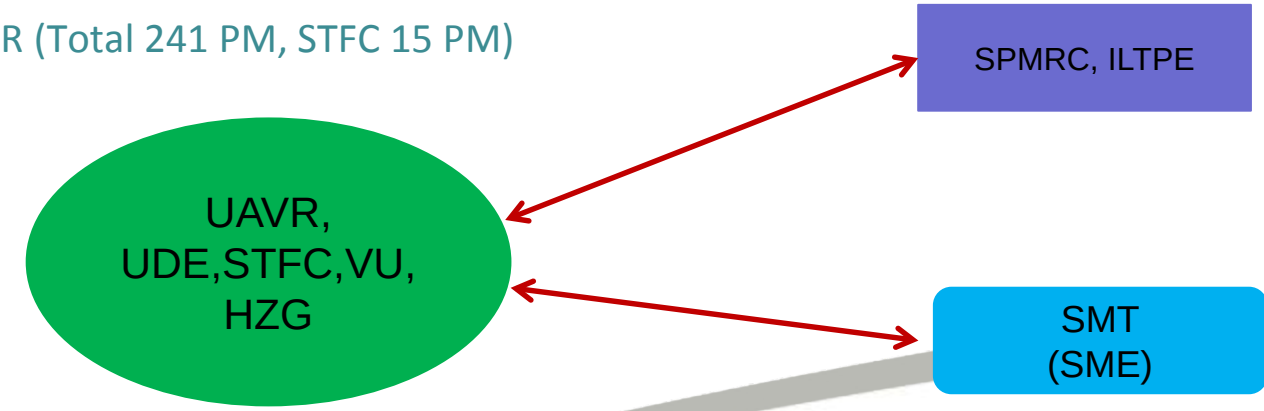
TUMOCS

TUneable Multiferroics based on oxygen OCtahedral Structures“

The main objective of the project is development of new lead-free multiferroic materials for prospective application in forms of films and/or arranged layers in which the cross-coupling (magnetic-dipolar-elastic) can be tuned by both internal and external factors.

- 6 Beneficiaries (Academic & Research Organization & SME)
  - University of Aveiro (Portugal) 5 academic/research organizations (Portugal), University of Duisburg-Essen & Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht (Germany), STFC (UK), Vilnius University (Lithuania) and Smallmatek LDA (SME; Portugal)
- 2 Partner organizations (Research Organizations)
  - Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre (Belarus) & Institute for Low Temperature Physics and Engineering (Ukraine)
- Grant amount
  - 814,00 EUR (Total 241 PM, STFC 15 PM)



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Proposal development

- RISE is a **research and innovation project** implemented via secondments
- Goals of the project cannot be achieved via a single organization – it requires all those involved to be successful
- Consortium is based on the needs of the project
  - Be clear as to what each partner will bring to the consortium
- Secondments should be of significant duration, necessary and reasonable/feasible
- Consortium members have a track record of working together
- The project should develop long lasting collaborations and bring added value to participants
- Demonstrate sustainable impact on the network 9and the wider community)
  - E.g. joint events and dissemination activities
- Impact
  - EU added value
  - On the scientific community
  - Developing relationships with non-EU countries
  - Developing long lasting multidisciplinary collaborations

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A Picture (table) is worth a thousand words

But make sure they are legible!

Facilities, equipment, knowledge, skills, experience	The [redacted] participants							
	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
High-pressure synthesis of perovskite materials						+		
Preparation of films of perovskite materials		+		+				
Synthesis and anion exchange in LDH materials	+			+				+
High-power sonication						+		
Electrochemical film deposition/growth	+				+			

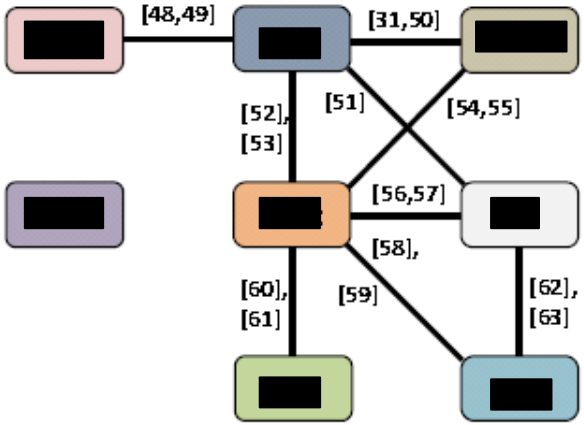

Figure 9: Schematic representation of the R&I collaborations established before the [redacted] project. The numbers denote the publications (the most recent and relevant) listed in *References*.

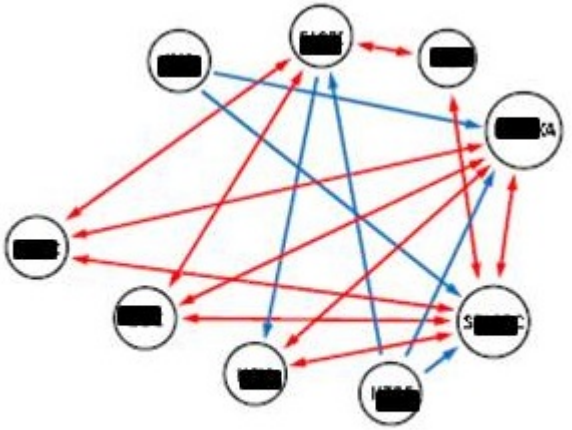

Figure 6: Scheme of staff exchange between participants of the [redacted] project

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Feedback from Evaluators

Excellence – criteria 1

Strengths

- The proposal defines an interesting joint research activity plan clearly explaining its position in the frame of the state-of-art of the research topic worldwide and possible technological and industrial implications.
- The proposed research methodology is highly effective.
- The interaction between partner organizations through staff exchanges is appropriate.
- The roles of the participants are clearly defined and appropriate.
- A detailed and clear secondment program is reported showing that a strong collaboration and interactions among the partners already exist and that they will benefit from the planned project.
- The methodological approach is fully appropriate and of high originality.
- The participating institutes have complementary expertise.
- The project is highly interdisciplinary.
- The objectives are relevant and well-formulated, being supported by the comprehensive state-of-the-art.

Weaknesses

- Unclear how the partners will interact and benefit from sharing knowledge.
- Lack of details on the content of the planned internal workshops.
- Innovative aspect of the project is not sufficiently described.
- The female participation in the project is rather weak and a strategy to mitigate this is not clearly presented
- little concrete detail about the visits, for example regarding the targets, planned tasks, and the knowledge acquired

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Impact – criteria 2

Strengths

- Significant contribution to develop new and lasting research collaborations
- Good scientific communication strategy.
- Proposal will foster lasting collaborations with the Third Country partner.
- Participation of an industrial (SME) partner increases the potential practical impact of the project.
- Positive impact on skills development.
- Very good potential to enhance the research and innovation level in the European Research Area.
- Good communications and public outreach strategy with varied and realistic activities.
- Career opportunities will be enhanced by the multidisciplinary knowledge gains as well as by the exposure to both academic and industrial environment.
- The presented plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results is well thought out.

Weaknesses

- Public outreach activities are not sufficiently detailed.
- Not enough attention is dedicated to successfully prove an impact for the whole European Research Area.
- Dissemination strategy towards the scientific community and towards industry is not explained in sufficient detail in view of the size of the project.
- Cooperation between all partners is not sufficiently addressed
- The involvement of non-academic partners in results dissemination is rather low, and their potential in targeting industry is not fully exploited.
- Although the plan for communication to different target audiences is mentioning several activities, their description in terms of types of activities and the targeted public is very generic.

Implementation – criteria 3

Strengths

- Proposed work plan is very well described.
- Allocation of tasks and resources is appropriate.
- Management structure is adequate for a project of this size.
- Participating organisations have high scientific and technological competencies in the relevant fields and they show a clear commitment to implement the project.
- Complementarity of the participating organisations and institutional commitment is specified and relevant to the project.
- Allocation of resources is justified.
- Total duration of secondments is adequate to achieve the objectives of the research program.
- Gender issues are appropriately taken into account.
- Objectives, tasks and expected results of the work plan are well described.
- The competences, expertise and complementarity of partners are well described.
- Partners own appropriate research facilities to achieve the goals of the project.
- The partners are highly committed to the project

Weaknesses

- Provisions for risk mitigation are not sufficiently detailed.
- Dependency and interconnectivity of tasks and work packages is not evident.
- Progress monitoring tools are insufficient in view of the complexity of the project.
- Gender aspects are not considered sufficiently.
- Feasibility of implementing activities within the project timeframe is not convincingly outlined.
- No soft skills or other complementary skills courses are envisaged.
- There is no description of a management structure to assist the project coordinator.
- The list of deliverables is not consistent with the timing of work packages.

Benefits

- Feedback from those involved:
  - They would apply again
  - They are enjoying the experience
  - Money for training and workshops that they wouldn't have otherwise
  - Having funding to work with non UK/EU partners
  - Were already collaborating already but this has enabled them to do so on a more formal level.

- Get to work on a multidisciplinary innovative research project of your choosing
- Get to work with people you want to work with
- Sharing of knowledge and expertise
- Helps to build and solidify long lasting collaborations/relationships

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Problems we have faced

- Difficulty in fulfilling secondments
  - People forget the 6 month rule (this rule has been changed in 2018)
  - Difficulty in finding people to go for long periods of time or who will meet the 30day min criteria
    - For example JENNIFER, only 2/3 people have gone for the min 30days we are over halfway through the project. The majority have completed on average 10/15 days
- Partner organisations not being aware of eligibility criteria for seconded staff
- Budget
  - The costs associated with long term stays
  - Flight costs
  - Split stays
  - Coordination costs
- Partner payments
  - Different organisations have different policies on third-country/non-employee payments
- Consortium Agreements and Partnership Agreement
  - Took a VERY long time in some cases

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Summary

- RISE are **research projects** implemented through a series of secondments
- The consortium members are based on the needs of the project
- Be realistic on the number and length of the secondments
- Design deliverable such that even if secondments are not completed they can still be achieved
  - E.g. reports, scientific results, dissemination &outreach activities etc.
- Make sure everyone is aware of the financial rules and eligibility requirements
- Clarify budget and payment arrangements early
- Beneficiary is responsible for ensuring eligibility:
  - For both the researcher and the secondment
    - including those coming from the partner organiza
- Remember the practicalities
  - housing, visa's etc.
- Things can/will cost more than expected

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Questions?

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branwen.hide@stfc.ac.uk

JENNIFER con't – Hubs : How do they work

- Staff member eligibility:
  - Condition 1: Considered staff under national law and internal practices
  - Condition 2:ESR, ER, Admin, tech
  - Condition 3: Linked/actively engaged in R&I activities within sending organisation for at least last 6 months (full-time equivalent) prior to first secondment

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JENNIFER con't – Hubs : How do they work

But:

- But there are no REA specific contractual arrangement
- Contractual/employment link is not related to pay

Must be able to prove:

- Staff is under control, instructions and supervision of the sending organization
- Sending organization has legal means to impose RISE obligations to seconded staff
- 6 month rule

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JENNIFER con't – 'Unpaid Research Associate'

- **Was agreed during the GAP phase by the PO**
- Covers conditions 1 and 3
    - the designate will be an associate member of the personnel of STFC subject to its staff rules and regulations.
    - social benefits remain the responsibility of the home institution and, failing that, of the Associate; in particular the Associate will make sure that he/she has medical insurance that is adequate for him-/her-self.
    - Provided that the Effective Date is 6 (six) months prior to the Associate commencing their secondment as detailed 'JENNIFER' project, reimbursement for travel expenses in connection to the period of secondment will be covered by STFC.
    - Travels must be authorized according to STFC policy and must be agreed by the UK coordinator
    - The Associate will have access to the STFC infrastructure for research activities connected to the JENNIFER project
    - The Associate must comply with the relevant European Commission regulations and satisfy any eligibility criteria and rules before completing the secondment

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