



CERN Baltic Group

“Advanced Particle Therapy Center for the Baltic states” Feasibility Study Strategy Group

Meeting #2

Minutes of the meeting

Agenda for the meeting:

- Economic motivation
 - Updates for the economic motivation section
- Review of additional comments
 - Detailed intermediate milestones and progress indicators
 - Risk mitigation strategies
 - Proposal’s scientific rationale
 - Etc.
- Pending additions
 - Feasibility study timeline
 - Organisational structure of the Feasibility Study
- Planning of next meeting.

Main discussion points:

1. Economic motivations

- As Dr. Giedrė Kvedaravičienė, the originally scheduled presenter, did not participate in the meeting, the Convener, Erika Korobeinikova (*LSMU*), proposed that each group member can review the updates individually, as additions to the economic motivation section are visible in the Proposal document. There were no objections from group members.

2. Review of additional comments

- Discussion on the comment made by Asst. Prof. Jevgenijs Proskurins (*RSU*) “Identification of regulatory, technological, and funding risks should be integrated into the feasibility plan, including mitigation strategies”. Discussion question: *what risks should we include at the proposal stage?*
 - Dr. Alberto Degiovanni (*RTU*) noted that *funding risks* must be included, and the mitigation strategy should describe activities for fundraising at national levels, clarifying that there will be no national lead per pillar but rather a structured approach to securing funding across agencies and ministries.

- The Convener questioned whether *regional expertise*, in combination with external specialists, is sufficient for conducting the study or if it could pose a risk. Dr. Alberto Degiovanni (RTU) acknowledged this risk and emphasized the need for collaboration and networking to bridge any expertise gaps. Deputy Convener Kristaps Palskis (RTU) added that expanding the expertise network would require additional funding.
- Discussion on the comment made by Asst. Prof. Jevgenijs Proskurins (RSU): “Clearer pathways to achieving long-term financial sustainability (e.g., specific revenue streams or international partnerships) are essential”. Discussion question: *should financial sustainability be more emphasized?*
 - The Convener highlighted that according to the current proposal document the Feasibility Study aims to define the “possible economic benefits of the facility and future projections” as well as the “promotion of R&D innovation capabilities for sustainable long-term economic benefits.”
 - The Deputy Convener raised the question of whether financial sustainability is sufficiently addressed as it would be the subject of investigation during the Feasibility Study itself or if specific pathways should already be included in the proposal.
 - No discussion or consensus was reached by the group. The Convener suggested emphasizing sustainability and long-term analysis in the proposal.

3. Pending additions

3.1. Feasibility Study timeline:

- Deputy Convener, according to the comments made by Asst. Prof. Jevgenijs Proskurins, addressed the need to introduce some specific timelines, and measurable outcomes for each, deliverable because that would essentially enhance accountability and allow better tracking of the progress.
- Justinas Jonusas (NVI) suggested intermediate meetings during the Feasibility Study as milestones.
- Deputy Convener agreed and asked if through 2 year-long investigation period meetings every 6 months would be sufficient.
- Justinas Jonusas (NVI) proposed that more frequent intermediate meetings - three-month instead of six-month intervals - should be planned for all the persons involved in the Feasibility Study, with smaller working group meetings occurring even more often.
- Convener asked if we need to include meetings with the International Board for progress reports as milestones.
- Dr. Alberto Degiovanni (RTU) recommended including periodic reviews from the International Advisory Board as official milestones and adding regular meetings of working group leaders to risk mitigation sections discussed at the beginning of the meeting.
- Convener asked if the milestones should be described by the working group during the Feasibility Study process or they should be defined in the proposal.

- Prof. Maija Radziņa (*UL, RSU*) recommended defining the milestones upfront – already in the Feasibility Study proposal stage.
- As for other milestones, the Convener asked if we should divide the current deliverables into many milestones for the timeline or maybe define milestones as a percentage of deliverables accomplished.
- Justinas Jonusas (*NVI*) proposed to use the preliminary proposal (deliverables) draft as a base to formulate milestones.
- Dr. Alberto Degiovanni (*RTU*) was asked and agreed to participate in expanding the milestones and timetable in the proposal paper, along with the Deputy Convener and the Convener. The Deputy Convener invited the entire group to provide any additional comments on the proposal draft before concluding the discussion.

3.2.Organisational structure of the Feasibility Study

- Deputy Convener pointed out that in the previous meeting we've all agreed that in the organizational structure, we focus on task-level leadership by the Baltic institutions and having overall management via the CERN Baltic group itself. This gives the need to rearrange the organizational structure part of the proposal.
- Deputy Convener emphasized the importance of retaining the Stakeholder Advisory Board. He also proposed maintaining an independent international Scientific Advisory Board (comprising 8–10 experts, some of whom have already been suggested) with specialists in clinical applications, physics, economics, and nuclear medicine.
- Justinas Jonušas (*NVI*) suggested including experts in cancer epidemiology in the Scientific Advisory Board.
- Convener raised the need to define CERN's involvement in the project structure.
- Deputy Convener commented that CERN was initially part of the steering committee. However, as we are reorganizing the structure, we should carefully reconsider where CERN fits within the new framework, given its role as a crucial partner. There is a possibility of adding CERN to the Scientific Advisory Board or even assigning it a broader function.
- Dr. Brigita Abakevičienė (*Convener of the CERN Baltic Group, KTU*) recommended including government representation in the project structure.

3.3.Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- Prof. Maija Radziņa (*UL, RSU*) suggested a side discussion on drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize collaboration between involved universities and institutions. The proposal was also supported by Dr. Brigita Abakevičienė (*Convener of the CERN Baltic Group, KTU*).
- Deputy Convener asked if it should be prepared before and signed on the launch of the Feasibility Study.
- Prof. Maija Radziņa (*UL, RSU*) commented that early preparation of the agreement would show a clear intention and increase the credibility and accountability of the Feasibility Study and involved working group.
- Prof. Sergei Nazarenko (*TalTech*) noted that in Estonia, such documents require institutional involvement in the drafting process and may take time for approval.
- Prof. Maija Radziņa (*UL, RSU*) suggested the involvement of the Baltic Assembly in the preparation for MoU. As Baltic Assembly stands as inter-parliamentary

political entity within the Baltic States, such approach would therefore allow to reach all involved political bodies in the 3 Baltic States.

- As pointed out by Prof. Maija Radziņa (*UL, RSU*) and further inputs from Deputy Convener, Baltic Assembly should be considered as the interested body for MoU preparation and dissemination, as Baltic Assembly has already shown clear interest and has contributed to the development of “Advanced Particle Therapy centre for the Baltic States” initiative.

3.4.Task Allocation & Deliverables

- As there were comments raised on the large number of deliverables proposed currently for the Feasibility Study, the Deputy Convener pointed out that the overall outcome of the Feasibility Study is one single core deliverable – the Feasibility Study report - which would serve as a joint document encompassing these smaller deliverables within the task section. Nevertheless, Convener and Deputy Convener agreed that the number of deliverables could be reduced, by restructuring the working plan. Current proposal from Convener and Deputy Convener is:
 - to retain the main blocks: clinical, technical, economic, and transversal;
 - all the respective tasks per block are also to be retained, however, the current "Deliverables" should be renamed as "Subtasks" or as “Areas of Investigation” within each task;
 - to still have measurable deliverables to assess the progress of the project, up to 2 deliverables should be defined per investigation block, while keeping in mind that all the deliverables act as Sections in the final Feasibility Study report.
- Justinas Jonušas (*NVI*) raised the question of how subtasks would be allocated among institutions and suggested the formation of small working groups within each task.
- Dr. Alberto Degiovanni (*RTU*) supported and emphasized that overlapping areas of investigation could be better structured under subtasks within main deliverables.
- Justinas Jonušas (*NVI*) proposed to name the leader institutions of the pillars.
- Deputy Convener responded that it’s a possibility that should be further discussed after finalizing the institutional task list, which was shared earlier shared within the group.

4. Closing remarks & planning of next meeting

- The next APTCB FSSG working group meeting will be held on the 7th of February, 2025 at 11:00 (EET);
- Preliminary agenda for the next meeting was proposed by Deputy Convener:
 - Updates regarding the milestone timeline
 - Updates regarding the organizational structure
 - Updates regarding the working plan: identification of possible contributors in each Task
 - Start discussions on stakeholder engagement strategy and necessary lobbying
- There were no objections or additions within the group.
- Task Assignments:

- Institutions must confirm their interest in participation in specific tasks and areas of work before the next meeting.
- Convener, Deputy Convener, and Dr. Alberto Degiovanni will incorporate the discussed milestones and organizational structure into the proposal, which is expected to be shared before the next meeting.
- The Deputy Convener encouraged group members to prepare in advance for a discussion during the next meeting on the stakeholder engagement strategy and necessary lobbying efforts.

Prepared by:

Erika Korobeinikova and Kristaps Paļskis

Convener and Deputy Convener of APTCB Feasibility Study Strategy Group