

ORIENT- NM

<u>Organi</u>sation of the <u>European</u> Research Communi<u>ty</u> on <u>N</u>uclear Materials

A Coordination and Support Action in Preparation of a Co-Funded European Partnership on Nuclear Materials



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Work Package 3 – EJP structure and functioning: legal issues, resource needs and implementation

Deliverable D3.9:

Resource analysis - final

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Table of contents

Disclaimer	3
Table of contents	4
List of abbreviations	5
Introduction	6
Orient NM CEP structure	6
Mapping of potential activities	8
Resources needed	10
Evaluation of the costs needed to cover CEP activities	11
Total costs of CEP Project	17
Preliminary analysis of funding mechanisms	19
Summary and conclusions	20



List of abbreviations

Consortium Agreement
Co-funded European Partnership
Co-funded European Partnership on Nuclear Materials
Confidential
For example
Executive Board
European Commission
European Joint Programme
European Sustainable Nuclear Industrial Initiative
External Scientific Advisory Board
European Union
Evaluation Committee
Executive Board
Executive Committee
General Assembly
Gender Balance
Gender Balance Report
International Atomic Energy Agency
Innovation Group
Intellectual Property Rights
Joint Program
Joint Undertaking
Management Board
Member State
Nuclear Energy Agency
Organisation of the European Research Community
on Nuclear Materials
Public
Research and Development
Research entities
Scientific Advisory Board
Scientific Committee
Sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform
Support Office
Strategic Research Agenda
Technical Advisory Group

Introduction

This task will explore different scenarios in terms of realistically available resources and funding to cover the costs of executing the SRA. It therefore relies heavily on the results of the other work packages and, in turn, provides crucial information to WP1 and WP4. It is divided in four phases, as follows.

Initializing phase (M1-M12): monitoring of WP2 (Vision paper and SRA) progress and evolution of T3.1, which determines the structure that the resources need to reflect.

Phase Ia (M13-M19) and Phase Ib (M19-M24): Brainstorming among task members (and other potential contributors) focused on specific elements of business plan and scenario analysis. It will include mapping potential activities and their expected outcomes, funding sources (open calls, topical calls, national programs, industrial projects, solution calls (CPPS), Public-Private Partnerships etc.) and their impacts on requirements for the governance of the CEP, and finally optimisation of budgeting. This phase is finalised by a meeting of the task team (M18-M19), devoted to the selection of the most suitable ideas and procedures for further development, followed by an in-depth analysis.

Orient NM CEP structure

Co-funded European Partnerships (and programme co-funded actions in general) are defined in the Horizon Europe rules for participation and dissemination as "actions to provide multi-annual co-funding to a programme of activities established or implemented by legal entities managing or funding R&I programmes, other than Union funding bodies; such a programme of activities may support networking and coordination, research, innovation, pilot actions, and innovation and market deployment actions, training and mobility actions, awareness-raising and communication, dissemination and exploitation, and provide any relevant financial support, such as grants, awards and procurement, as well as Horizon Europe blended finance, or a combination thereof. The programme co-fund action may be implemented by those legal entities directly, or by third parties on their behalf."

The structure of Orient NM CEP has been defined in WP3 and was first described in D3.3. Its final version is presented in D3.8 (Structure and Governance). The formal structure includes:

- a. General Assembly GA;
- b. Executive Board ExB;
- c. Innovation Group IG
- d. Coordinator PC;
- e. Management Support Office MSO;
- f. Scientific Advisory Board SAB;



- g. Innovation Group IG
- h. Evaluation Committee EvaCo
- i. Research Line RL;
- j. Projects;

The structure of the CEP is graphically presented on Fig. 1.



Fig. 1 Planned structure of the CEP.

We assume that the CEP will include three Transversal Workpackages and 5 Research Lines (one of them transversal to others). Each of the Research Lines will likely contain 3 projects, one long-term (5 years) and two short-term (3 years)¹. The diagram of the division of tasks into Research lines is presented in Fig. 2

¹ This is tentative. There might be more than one small projects per RL after the first call; at the launch of the second call, which relies on additional funding from the Euratom WP 2026-27, might lead to a prolongation of the partnership by one year to have 4 years projects, these are all possibilities, not fixed.



Fig. 2 Planned structure of the Research Lines and Work-Packages.

The transversal Work-Packages will be able to count on the services of the Management Support Office (part of WP coordination and daily management).

Mapping of potential activities

The tasks and activities of each element of the organizational structure are defined by general European Commission rules and CEP Consortium agreements. These tasks can be summarized as follows (the roles are supposed to be similar to those defined in the DESCA model):

<u>GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA)</u>: The highest decision-making body of the CEP. It is chaired by an appointed person elected by GA members and consists of one duly authorized representative of each beneficiary. The GA should meet at least once per year. The main role and duties of the GA are:

• Monitoring of project progress, achievements, costs.

• Solution of problems and conflicts that have a potential impact on project strategies, resources and achievement of planned objectives, including definition of the necessary contingency plans.

- Approval of changes in project management bodies.
- Proposals for changes to the research projects and the related budget.
- Proposals for possible amendments to the Consortium Agreement (CA).



ORIENT

EXECUTIVE BOARD (ExB): At the moment of D3.9 submission the ExB is a body composed of the leaders of the Research Lines (RLL) and of the transversal WPs (WPL). The Coordinator, who leads the Coordination and Daily Management WP chairs the ExB, while a deputy ExB chair is selected amongst the other ExB members. The ExB should meet at least twice per year. The main responsibilities of the ExB are:

• Project management: overall project plan, coordinating implementation of work within the Research Lines.

• Legal management: managing the CA among all partners. Administrative management: preparation of management meetings. Collection, monitoring, integration and consolidation of administrative data from RL, preparation of reports.

• Financial management: keep records of the distribution of funds; monitor the partners' efforts and expenses within RL.

• Project reviews: preparation and organisation of partner meetings, including review meetings with the EC.

• Quality management: supporting the consolidation and maintenance of the quality plan.

<u>COORDINATOR</u>: Coordinator will be selected by the CEP Partners and will be responsible for:

• Acting as an interface between the EC and the CEP consortium to ensure that all project activities follow the grant agreement;

- Chairing the ExB;
- Budget administration and allocation between the partners and tasks;
- Supporting timely and efficient communication between partners;

• Submitting to the REA the contractual documents and reports, based on reports from the Research Lines;

• Acting as chief spokesperson for the project and participating in major dissemination events.

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT OFFICE: composed of 3-4 employees of beneficiaries or affiliated entities. MSO is a body supporting and assisting the Coordinator and the ExB in everyday administrative tasks, involved for financial and legal management; dissemination and communication activities, including publication follow up; ethics issues; project call organization; and E&T&KM actions. The complete description of the functions and the composition of the MSO still needs to be defined in detail.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD: The SAB provides scientific guidance to the CEP, supporting and supervising research excellence, directions and activities, participating in the project selection and ensuring the realization of the strategic objectives of the CEP. SAB should meet twice per year and prepare a yearly assessment of the CEP.

INNOVATION GROUP (IG): IG should meet at least twice per year and is responsible for:

- Promoting innovation by providing expert advice to the CEP
- Ensuring consideration of the industry point of view on the Research Lines
- Participating in selection of the projects
- Acting as interface between research and industrial partners of the research actions carried out in the frames of the CEP
- Prepare yearly proposal of exploitation of results

EVALUATION COMMITTEE (EvaCo): EvaCo should meet for the selection process of projects, consequently two selection meetings are planned, one for each of the call for proposals, and for the evaluation of work progress in the Projects and Research Lines. It is assumed that EvaCo will meet twice per year. The EvaCo will be formed by representatives of ExB, SAB and IG

<u>RESEARCH LINE</u>: Cluster of Projects implemented in the frameworks of the CEP. One Research Line consists of one or more Projects that are related to that specific Research Line.

Resources needed

The organisational structure for the European Co-funded Partnership is being defined in T3.1 and will follow the EC Project model, with some modifications. Main duties of the Consortium Agreement is to regulate the following:

- a. Ensure governance and management of the CEP to achieve the objectives of the Partnership,
- b. Guarantee the consistency and synergies of CEP activities with the EU research and innovation landscape; and
- c. Guarantee that all CEP procedures such as identification of its objectives, priorities, vision, preparation of the Strategic Research Agenda SRA and work programmes as well as the CEP management system are correctly carried out, in line with EC rules and national legal regulations.

Main organizational tasks of the ExB, with the support of the MSO, are:

- a. Analysis and supervision of the Research Lines compliance with the EU scientific policy
- b. Supervision of the implementation of Projects within Research Lines
- c. Organization of meetings, reporting, exchange of information between CEP partners,



- d. Organization and follow up of dissemination and popularization activities, including publications
- e. Organization and follow up of education, training, mobility and knowledge management actions

To perform these tasks, necessary resources have to be available in the CEP, essentially in the form of sufficient funds to cover the costs of employment of persons performing functions in the CEP management system and to cover the costs of meetings, organization of everyday contacts, preparation of reports, financial documents etc.

Evaluation of the costs needed to cover CEP activities

Please note, that the detailed breakdown of costs concerns the expenses related to the overall organization and management of the CEP. Project costs are presented only as aggregate values and will be the subject of specific internal calls and subsequent grant proposals prepared accordingly to the EC rules.

The expenses may be divided into five main categories:

- a. Personnel costs
 - Salaries
- b. Direct costs
 - \circ Travel
 - o Consumables
 - o External services
- c. Indirect costs (Overheads)

Personnel Costs

The first element of the evaluation of the resources needed is the estimation of the number of persons involved in various bodies of the CEP together with the first assumption of their engagement (part of the FTE) in CEP activities. These data are presented in Table 1.

No	CEP Body	Function	Number	Part of	Workload
	-		of	FTE	FTE
			persons		
1	General	Member	20	0.04167	0.833
	Assembly				
2	ExB chair (CEP	ExB Member	2	0.8	1.6
	Coordinator) &				
	Deputy ExB				
	chair				
3	WP Leaders	ExB Member	6	0.5	3.0
4	Management	Functions:	4	0.8	3.2
	Support Office	 Secretary 			
		• Legal, Financial			
		and Project Call			
		Officer			
		 E&T&M & AI 			
		Communication			
		Dissemination,			
		Result			
		Exploitation			
		Officer			
5	Transversal	Senior Scientists	4	0.2	0.8
	Workpackages	Scientists	7	0.25	1.75
		Administrative	7	0.2 - 1	2.4
6	Scientific	Member	9	0.0	0.0 ¹
	Advisory Board				
7	Innovation	Member	9	0.0	0.0 ¹
	Group				
8	Evaluation	Member	5	0.0	0.0 ¹
	Committee				
				TOTAL	6.233 +
					1.75 +
					5.35 ²

Table 1. Personnel workload in the CEP.

¹ SAB, IG and EvaCo will not be compensated financially for their work. ²6.2334 FTE for Senior Scientists, 1.75 FTE for Scientists and 5.35 FTE for administrative personnel

CEP management bodies require thus covering the costs of employment roughly corresponding to 6.233 for Senior Scientists, 1.75 for Scientists and 5.35 FTE for administrative personnel. Assuming the average salary of 8,000 EUR/month for Senior Scientist, 4,500 EUR/month for Scientists and 3,500 EUR/month in administrative function this corresponds to 76,464.00 EUR monthly, 917,568.00 EUR yearly and **4,587,840.00 EUR** during 5 year of CEP project execution.



<u>Travel</u>

Second element of cost estimation is the analysis of expenses related to travel. It is assumed, that GA meetings should take place at least once per year: obligatory meetings will be live, the others will be organized as virtual meetings at no costs. The cost of participation per person has been estimated as follows: plane ticket 500 EUR, one night in hotel 150 EUR and two daily allowances at 92 EUR each. Consequently, the cost of participation in one 1-day long meeting per person equals to 742 EUR.

Cost of participation in Executive Board were estimated assuming that the meetings will be organized on a two months basis, two meetings per year will be organized as live meetings and four as virtual meetings. The cost per meeting and person was calculated as above.

Next position in the travel costs is the dedicated budget reserved for ExB Chair and Deputy Chair, allowing them to travel on various matters related to the implementation of the Partnership and the dissemination of the results and advances. These costs were estimated as five travels per year each, costs of each travel calculated as above.

Scientific Advisory Board is expected to meet in live, once per year. Travel costs will also be covered by the CEP project.

Most of the meetings of the Innovation Group are assumed to be carried out virtually, one live meeting per year is planned.

In detailed simulations we also assumed, that most of the live meetings will take 2 days which will bring the cost of one meeting to 984 EUR.

Travel costs needed to ensure the management, education, evaluation and supporting activities of the CEP project can thus be estimated as 682,440.00 EUR per five years of the project duration excluding overheads and 853,050.00 EUR with overheads.

Consumables

Efficient operation of the CEP Office would require some consumables related to the work of the MSO; printing and videoconferencing equipment, office supplies, etc. These costs were estimated at a flat rate of 5,000 EUR per year, i.e. 25,000 EUR plus 6,250 EUR of overheads, which gives 31,250 EUR per CEP.

Ν	CEP Body	Meeting	Number of	Length	Cost of	Number	Total cost
ο			events	(days)	participation	of	(5 years)
					(1 person)	persons	
1	General	Live	5	2	984	20	98,400.00
	Assembly	meeting					
		Virtual	5		0.0	20	0.00
		meeting					
2	Executive Board	Live	10	2	984	8	78,720.00
		meeting					
		Virtual	5		0.0	7	0.00
		meeting					
3	ExB chair (CEP	Dissemin	10	5	1710	2	34,200.00
	Coordinator) &	ation trips					
	Deputy ExB						
	chair						
4	MSO		10	2	984	4	39,360.00
5	WP	Live	0	0	0	0	0
	Coordination	meeting					
6	WP Education	Live	5	5	1710	20	171,000.00
		meeting					
7	WP Knowledge	Live	5	2	984	10	49,200.00
		meeting					
8	WP	Live	5	2	984	2	9,840.00
	Communication	meeting					
9	Scientific	Live	10	2	984	9	88,560.00
	Advisory Board	meeting					
		Virtual	5		0	10	0.00
		meeting		-			
10	Innovation	Live	10	2	984	9	88,560.00
	Group	meeting					
		Virtual	10		0.0	9	0.0
		meeting					
11	Evaluation	Live	5	2	984	5	24,600.00
	Committee	meeting					
		Virtual	5		0.0	5	0.00
	I	meeting				TOTAL	000 ((0.05
						TOTAL	682,440.00

Table 2. Estimated travel costs for the CEP



Projects evaluation

It is assumed that participants of the CEP are also responsible for conducting the calls, as well as evaluation and selection process of projects implemented within its framework. This process includes: (i) selection of projects for implementation, (ii) evaluation during the project implementation and (iii) evaluation of its implementation after completion.

The long-term Projects will be described in an initial project proposal and will be approved as a part of the evaluation process. Assuming that 5 Research Lines are implemented under the CEP, each of them composed of one long term and two short term Projects and three times more proposals will be submitted for each competition, it should be assumed that it will be necessary to make 30 initial, 15 intermediate and 15 final evaluations (60 in total). The minimum number of reviewers for one evaluation is 2, which makes a total of 120 ratings. It has been assumed that Evaluators will not be compensated financially for their work, only the travel costs will be reimbursed if travelling is needed and half of the meetings will be carried out in a remote way. Moreover, the costs of possible participation of other members of the commission (Innovation Group, Scientific Advisory Board, Executive Board) will be covered from other sources. To this amount one should add costs of physical meetings (5 in total), which gives EUR 18,550.00 in the travel costs.

External services

External services were divided into two main categories: services related to the organization of live meetings (costs like catering, renting of rooms, renting of the equipment needed, printing of materials for a meeting, etc.). These costs were estimated on a flat rate basis of 2,000 EUR per meeting. Taking into account that 75 live meetings are planned it gives 150,000 EUR per project duration.

To this amount should be added the costs of developing and maintaining the website for CEP projects (including also projects implemented under the CEP). We estimate the cost of preparing a website at EUR 8,000, and maintenance costs at EUR 2,000 per year. We estimate the total cost of the website at EUR 18,000.

In addition, external services may have to be required by the MSO, ranging from print layout of documents to legal or financial consultancy, as well as audits. This is estimated as 10,000 per year.

External services are thus estimated as 178,800,00 EUR and, including overheads, EUR 272,500.

Training and mobility

The CEP will facilitate competence building related to nuclear materials. To this end, the CEP will set up an "Educational Platform of Nuclear Materials" (name not final)

to manage and execute all education and training (E&T) and mobility actions that will be organized within a future CEP-NM, with the aim to preserve and extend the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to progress nuclear materials research and applications. In order to organize these activities, budget needs to be foreseen for organizing training courses and for funding and maintaining a mobility programme.² These activities will be executed by the Management Support Office (current assumption), probably involving also support from other Partnership participants, within a dedicated transversal WP of the CEP, with support of the Coordinator and members of the ExB, SAB and IG, who will form the Evaluation Board for the mobility programme.

In addition, budget needs to be reserved for online tools (e.g. webinar platform, dedicated webpage, mobility application portal ...). These tools are necessary to perform the key education and training activities.

Next, costs need to be foreseen for the integration of students and junior researchers. In order to allow them to network efficiently, the CEP will organize network events and discussion sessions.

The activities planned in the frames of Education, Training and Mobility actions are summarized in Table 3.

Task	ltem	Number of	Target	Yearly	Total
	cost	events/calls	yearly	cost	cost
Student (M.Sc. and	1,200	2 calls yearly	20	24,000	120,000
Ph.D.) mobilities					
Short courses,	4,000	1 call yearly	2	8,000	40,000
workshops (live)					
Short courses,	2,000	1 call yearly	2	4,000	20,000
workshops (virtual)					
Short laboratory	7,000	1 call yearly	2	14,000	70,000
trainings					
Summer schools	30,000	1-2 calls	3 per 5		90,000
			years		
Professional trainings	4,000	1 call yearly	2	8,000	40,000
(radiation protection,					
grant writing, use of					
standards, etc.)					
			TOTAL		380,000

Table 3: Planned E&T&M activities.

The values in Table 3 were calculated based on the following assumptions: (i) the staff costs are included in Personnel cost, here only additional costs related to the organization of training or event are included, (ii) each event lasts one week (5 working days), the travel and living costs are included in Travel costs, (iii) costs of coffee breaks, lunches (40 EUR per day), small consumables or materials and the



² At the same time, to optimize the use of resources, any opportunity offered by actions external to the Partnership, i.e., managed by ENEN, will be exploited.

use of the equipment (if necessary, lump sum of 3,000 EUR per training) are included and (iv) each training is planned for 10 participants.

Estimated costs for training and mobility are shown in Table 4.

No	Position	Total cost
		(5 years)
1	Personnel costs	In personnel costs
2	Organization of training courses	170,000.00
3	Mobility Programme	120,000.00
4	Summer schools	90,000.00
5	Tools (web page, webinar tools, remote learning)	25,000.00
6	Indirect costs	101,250.00
	TOTAL	506,250.00

Table 4: Estimated costs for training and mobility actions.

Projects

Projects implemented in the framework of the CEP will follow the general rules of the European Commission. Their costs will be described in project proposal and will be analyzed, implemented and checked by CEP and relevant EC services. In the first approximation 5 Research Lines composed each of three Projects (one long and two short term) leads to a final number of 15 Projects, each worth 2 MEUR (without overheads), hence the total value is 30 MEUR or 37.5 MEUR including overheads. The purpose of the CEP is that all expenses and activities that are different from R&D should be centralized at the level of CEP structure, thus virtually all the money allocated to projects should be spent exclusively for R&D activities.

Total costs of CEP Project

The complete cost evaluation of the Management, Educational, Dissemination and supporting activities of CEP during 5 years execution, excluding project costs, is presented in Table 4.

Table 5.

No	Position		Total cost
			(5 years)
1	Personnel costs		4,587840.00
2	Travel		682,440.00
3	Consumables		25,000.00
4	External services		178,000.00
5	Project Evaluations		In other positions
6	Education and Training		405,000.00
		Subtotal	5,878,280.00
	Overheads		1,469,570.00
		TOTAL	7,347,850.00

The cost of projects with the above assumptions is MEUR 24, which adding overheads gives a total of MEUR 30. Thus the preliminary analysis presented here allows us to estimate the cost of the Co-funded European Partnership project as: **37,347,850.00** EUR. Two supplementary cost estimation were made assuming, that in the second phase of the CEP project an additional funding may be obtained in the amount of 10 MEUR or 20 MEUR. Any additional funding in the second phase of the CEP will revert in more money for R&D projects.

An open question in the resources analysis is the problem of the Reimbursement Rates. The tools developed in WP3 allow for flexible analysis of various scenarios, e.g. different Reimbursement Rates for different project activities. At the current stage we are assuming, that higher RRs (higher EC participation in project costs) will be used in Management and Education&Training activities, whereas lower RRs will be used in R&D projects. All simulations are made under assumption, that the overall reimbursement should follow European Commission rules, i.e. 55% of financing form EC, 45% of financing from Member States.

In the current estimation the costs of the CEP management (*latu sensu*, i.e., including all activities that are different from, strictly, R&D, including E&T&KM, dissemination, communication, result exploitation, etc.) equal to 19% of the total CEP costs if no additional funding would be received in the second phase of the partnership. In case of 10 MEUR of additional funding this fraction drops down to 15%, in case of additional 20 MEUR for research projects to 12%. Any additional funding will decrease this fraction. All these values are significantly better than in currently run EC projects pointing to the more efficient use of the funds in Co-funded European Partnership.



Preliminary analysis of funding mechanisms

In Deliverable D3.2 "Legal Aspects" the basis for a financing of the CEP Action has been defined. In principle the CEP funding should resemble that of a conventional EU project, except that the EC provides only part of the costs, the remaining part being matching funds from MS. Main income categories are:

- Complementary "national" funding
- In-kind contributions
- Financial support to affiliated entities

Although the actual EC funding rate will be a result of negotiations, at the current stage a general consensus is that 45% of the costs will be covered by matching funds and 55% will come from European Commission. By applying this breakdown to the whole planned project costs, the EC contribution can be estimated at 20,541,317.50 EUR and the contribution from the national institutions at 16,806,532.50 EUR. However, if we use various reimbursement rates for various cost positions, e.g. increasing the EC contribution for managerial, education training costs and reducing EC contribution in projects we can easily fit in the planned EC contribution of 20 MEUR. Assuming an average EC contribution in Management, E&T&M and Dissemination parts of 60% it would lead to the amount of 4,408,710 EUR. Consequently, the EC contribution to R&D activities should be reduced down to 16,132,927 EUR what corresponds to 53.8% of the R&D costs. The national contribution to R&D activities should thus be increased to 46.2% what seems to be a negligible increase.

Limiting the Commission's participation in the entire CEP project to EUR 20 million, according to current CEP costs estimates, means either an increase in the contribution from national institutions to 46.5% or a reduction in project costs. At the current stage of project preparation, both options are being considered.

The above estimations mean that for each 2 MEUR project the sum of national contributions will be close to 1.3 MEUR, which corresponds roughly to 220 kEUR per project participant (assuming 6 participants per project). A similar level of involvement of national funds in existing CEPs occurs now and obtaining such funds from national sources of financing can be considered possible. Therefore, it seems that also in the case of CEP-type projects, the Member States can allocate adequate funds for the implementation of these projects.

One problem may be the rigid catalogue of eligible costs in the research projects. This topic is currently being discussed within the Orient NM consortium. One of the possible solutions may be the establishment of an additional fund based on a contribution paid by project partners from national funds.

Summary and conclusions

The analysis presented in this document is a first approximation to the financing of the CEP Action dedicated to the studies of materials for nuclear applications. This analysis will be refined and adjusted to the conditions as details are defined within ORIENT-NM and by the European Commission, and negotiated with the Member States.

It is worth emphasizing that the preliminary cost analysis indicates the possibility of obtaining significant cost rationalization by shifting many costs to the central CEP budget described above. This applies to such positions as management, dissemination and communication, education, training and knowledge management. Current estimates indicate that the sum of these costs will constitute from 12% to 19% of the entire CEP budget (the higher is the additional funding the better this ratio is), which is a lower value than in the case of the sum of individual projects, as similar activities usually account for as much as 25% of the project costs. At the same time, we expect effects of scale as the education and training activities will be more effective for a larger group of interested people, popularization trough a single webpage more efficient etc. In addition, any further funding will in fact reduce the share of costs not used for R&D. All these factors should lead to a better use of funds within the Co-funded European Partnership compared to the sum of the individual EJP projects.















Narodowe Centrum Badań Jądrowych National Centre for Nuclear Research ŚWIERK instytut kategorija+. JRC collaboration partner







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