News from the Working Group on Site Selection Procedure and Criteria

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SiSeC WG Chair

ET-PP Meeting – May 5-7th 2026

Barcelona

Working Group on Site Selection Procedure and Criteria

Background and purpose

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The Board of Governmental Representatives (BGR) for the Einstein Telescope (ET) was established as a platform to discuss and streamline the views and actions in the Ministries and as a sounding board for the coordinators of the project.

Its purpose is, among others, to reach an agreement on the procedure to select the host country for the ET, including what kind of information will be needed for the selection procedure.

The Working Group on Site Selection Procedure and Criteria is set up to provide advice to the BGR on this specific subject

Working Group on Site Selection Procedure and Criteria

Terms of Reference

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The Working Group (WG) shall provide a draft execution plan to the BGR on the site selection procedure for the ET that ensures its fairness and transparency. This will include:

- the identification and the definition of the criteria to take into account,
- their respective weighting,
- the decision procedure,
- timeframe and intermediate steps.

The WG is NOT involved in the execution of the site selection process and the criteria should be agnostic of the geometry chosen for the ET (one triangle or 2L solution) – subject of another process, delivering end 2026

Working Group on Site Selection Procedure and Criteria

Terms of Reference

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To this aim, the WG will:

- build on the preparatory work done by ETO, within the relevant activities of the INFRA-DEV ET-PP (Preparatory Phase) Project, and by the “Site Characterisation Board” of the ET Collaboration,
- analyse existing information, including procedures and criteria used for site selection for other research infrastructures, and identify demonstrated good practices,
- apply them to the specific case of the ET, in all its dimensions,
- adopt a comprehensive approach, including technical, economic, environmental and societal impact, costs, risks, and governance,

The WG should deliver a preliminary report to the BGR for its meeting in June 2026 and its final report by September 2025

Divide work up into domains, conducted in Sub Groups

Areas to be covered

1	Scientific and technical requirements of the detector
2	Civil works and infrastructure
3	Local costs, financing and resourcing
4	Deliverability by the host team
5	Local ecosystem: scientific, technical, environmental, socio-economic
6	Community and connectivity

Sub Groups proposed

1	Scientific and technical requirements of the detector (includes local IT needs)
2	Civil works, environment and geology (2+3 plus some of 4,5)
3	Contextual factors: ecosystem, community and connectivity (6 plus some of 4,5)
4	Overall costings and finance (3 plus some of 5)

Criteria to be established, defined and refined by each SG, communicating with and through WG to avoid gaps and duplication and consistency of detail, with initial guidance provided by SG mandates

Development of criteria and weightings

4 subgroups have been set up, with agreed scope and terms of reference

SG areas

1	Scientific and technical requirements of the detector
2	Civil works, environment and geology
3	Contextual factors: ecosystem, community and connectivity
4	Overall costings and finance

Scope of SG work

- Refine drafted criteria, develop definitions and propose initial weightings/minimum conditions/thresholds to be met. Aim to make the weighting method as quantitative as possible cf SKA
- Define the information or evidence to be submitted by bidders, including the methodology to be used, assessment of risks and uncertainties where relevant, and the nature of any validation processes required

Membership of WG, SGs – and Chairs (highlighted)

Name	Country	SG1	SG2	SG3	SG4
Ken Haenen	Belgium			1	
Vernesa Smolčić	Croatia	1			1
Reynald Pain	France				1
Guido Müller	Germany		1		
Giovanni Bisoffi	Italy	1	1		
Hans Chang	Netherlands			1	1
Tomasz Bulik	Poland	1		1	
Rafael Rebolo	Spain	1		1	1
Sheila Rowan	United Kingdom	1			1
Frédéric Nguyen	Belgium	1	1		
Vibor Jelić	Croatia		1		
Vincent Poireau	France			1	
Harald Lück	Germany	1			
Marco Pallavicini	Italy				1
Stan Bentvelsen	Netherlands	1			
Stephen Fairhurst	United Kingdom				
Andrew Harrison	International				
John Osborne	International		1		
Helle Pedersen	International	1			
David Reitze	International		1		1
Vicky Kalogera	International	1			
Tamara Bud	International		1		
Lars Börjesson	International				1
Andreas Rietbrock	Germany		1		
Monique Bossi	Italy			1	

WG

SG only

SiSe WG Secretariat: Rachele Maria Nocera (Italy) and Jerôme Pourbaix (Belgium)

Admin support: SG1 Marius Groll(DE); SG3 Luca Latronico (IT); Florian Weissbach (DE)

Sub Groups 1 and 2: scopes

Scientific and technical requirements of the detector

- **Noise**
  Maximum admissible levels to ensure compliance with ET sensitivity requirements
  - Seismic noise:
  - Newtonian noise:
  - Magnetic noise:
  - Other relevant environmental/anthropogenic source
  - Geological and geophysical characteristics
- **E-Infrastructure**
  Include infrastructure for low-latency data processing on or near the site of the detector and also for connections with equipment for later-stage data analysis.

Civil works, environment and geology

- **Reliability and stability of the underground environment hosting the infrastructure**
- **Construction methods and the achievable level of functionality and performance of the infrastructure**
- **Authorization issues**
- **Expected environmental impacts due to construction**

Sub Groups 3 and 4: outline scopes

Contextual factors: ecosystem, community and connectivity

- **‘Deliverability’ by the local team**
- **Ecosystem and socio-economic impact**
- **Human/social issues**
- **Connectivity and accessibility for construction and operations**

Overall costs and financing

- **Methodology to determine the cost of the ET together with estimates of timelines, uncertainties, risks and contingency in a manner acceptable to all potential Members drawing on input from other SGs**
- **Financial terms offered by the potential host(s)**

Note: SiSeC WG is not explicitly expected to cover costing aspects of the detector, but the costing methodology it proposes for site-sensitive work should be compatible with what is proposed for the detector

Next steps

1. SGs to produce preliminary report to the BGR on their criteria, including definitions/methodology, acceptable ranges and validation methods where relevant, and weighting scheme — Mid-June 2026

2. The decision procedure, including timeframe and intermediate steps. — Mid-June 2026
3. Final report to be put together for submission to the BGR — August 2026

Discussing with the BGR throughout the nature of the overall process to decide on **both** the site(s) **and** the geometry. The current understanding is that there will be one call for potential hosts to bid with both site and geometry as open questions and somehow SiSeC WG input to be combined with that of the GCR

SiSeC WG criteria developed for both a 1-site and a 2-site solution

Thank you !

Questions ?

Contact: andrew.harrison@ceric-eric.eu

Working methods

- SGs meet approximately once a month, between WG meetings, reporting back through their Chair(s)
- SG membership drawn initially from WG members but can bring in additional expertise where are gaps – trying to keep size manageably small – up to 8 members - while possessing all key expertise necessary and also trying to ensure no glaring gaps in national representation
- Additional *ad hoc* expert input may be sought when needed
- A template has been developed to provide a checklist for output of the SGs to facilitate coherence and consistency of what is reported back to the WG for the overall report
- A central document repository for working and reference documents has been set up (Sharepoint)
- Approximate timetable (4-5 months with monthly meetings and work between meetings)

    - Confirm criteria and divide up work among SG members, identify need for additional members ✓
    - Draft definitions of criteria and propose initial weightings/minimum conditions to be met **WIP**
    - Rationalise criteria across SGs via WG
    - Define the information that bidders should submit in proposals – including methodology, risks, validation where appropriate