

Director's Corner

24 January 2008



Barry Barish

Common fund

Our work for the ILC is made up almost entirely of in-kind R&D efforts, coordinated and prioritised through the Global Design Effort. A small but very important element which enables the GDE to carry out its central function is the GDE common fund. It was created and is monitored by the Funding Agencies for Large Colliders (FALC) and the FALC Resource Group. I am pleased to report today that the GDE common fund for 2008 has been approved at FALC and will be fully funded internationally, including by the U.S. and U.K. and pending working out some details regarding individual contributions. We are very pleased by this positive development. It is an encouragement, especially in light of the funding cuts in the UK and US.

What is the common fund and why do we need it? Much of the discussion, especially at FALC, at the time the GDE was created had to do with opinions that the GDE should be a "light" organisation with minimal administration. I fully subscribed to this idea, and as a consequence we are a virtual effort without a real home base. We did not move people to create a core group in one location that would work together to drive the design (as attractive and effective as that might have been), but instead have worked to enable GDE members at all levels to participate from their home institutions. This helped us to successfully recruit most of the key people with the right expertise in this field into the GDE since they did not need to relocate. On the other hand, it presented us with a set of major challenges to be able to communicate and coordinate our work effectively, whether it involves carrying out specific tasks or making global decisions.

As a consequence a very light central effort has been created and funded through the common fund. The fund is made up of contributions from partner countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas, where one third is contributed from each region. The budget will be about 1.5 million dollars for 2008 for supporting a set of key functions for the entire global effort. We have an administration, very capably carried out by Maxine Hronek, who is the central administrative contact person for the GDE. Maura Barone superbly accomplishes our web functions, whether they be features of our web pages or setting up and sending out the electronic newsletter you are reading at the moment. We are trying to use the best tools we can employ to enable such a long-distance effort, including ILC Agenda for listing agendas for meetings, Webex for carrying out our web-based teleconferences and the ILC Doc to archive notes and talks.

We are in the process of adding several other critical technical functions where there are compelling reasons to centralise them for the global collaboration. For example we are setting up a common set of EDMS ([Engineering Design Management System](#)), the design tools at DESY, for carrying out collaborative design work on the technical design. We are also starting to use a set of costing tools to insure that we have one unified system for costing the ILC. We are also providing support for the new Research Director for the detector effort, avoiding the need to duplicate our support services.

Finally, a very important function of the GDE is to have active and effective global communications. We are supporting this activity through the common fund, including putting out technical materials like the Reference Design Report, developing materials for broader audiences, keeping the community informed or providing translations of relevant materials in many languages.

The GDE, through use of the common fund, has developed a small, but very effective central engine to provide tools and coordination for the worldwide ILC R&D effort. We are very pleased that we will be fully funded to carry out these activities over the coming year. On behalf of the entire GDE collaboration, I want to thank all the participating countries for their support!

-- Barry Barish



Maxine Hronek, GDE Administrative Assistant and Maura Barone, GDE Web Specialist are both supported through the Global Design Effort common fund.