



## Document information

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## Table of contents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Table of contents</i>   | 2 |
| <i>1. Introduction</i>   | 3 |
| <i>2. Main conclusions and recommendations concerning the policy, legal, practical and financial issues towards a future operation of XCELS as part of the ERA</i> | 3 |
| 2.1 Policy aspects   | 3 |
| 2.2 Legal aspects  | 3 |
| 2.3 Practical aspects  | 4 |
| 2.4 Financial aspects  | 4 |
| <i>3. Conclusion</i>   | 4 |
| <i>Annex I – List of participants at the Expert Round Table, 6 June 2018, DESY, Hamburg, Germany</i>   | 5 |

Project duration: 01.09.2015-31.08.2018

## 1. Introduction

This foresight document describing policy, legal, practical and financial issues towards a future operation of the Exawatt Center for Extreme Light Studies (**XCELS**) as part of the European Research Area (ERA) is based on the discussions led among the promoters and representatives of the XCELS project and representatives of research infrastructures and organizations from Europe. Discussions led over the duration of the project have been concluded by an Expert Roundtable on policy, legal, practical and financial issues towards a future operation of **XCELS** as part of the ERA (**MS06**), which has been organized at DESY (Hamburg, Germany) on 6 June 2018, as a satellite event of the CREMLIN Closing conference. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

## 2. Main conclusions and recommendations concerning the policy, legal, practical and financial issues towards a future operation of **XCELS** as part of the ERA

The discussions led among RI experts can be summarized as a compact set of recommendations to consider when addressing the various facets of the implementation of the XCELS project and its governing bodies.

### 2.1 Policy aspects

- In order to foresee operation of XCELS as part of the ERA's landscape of research infrastructures, its access policy has to be aligned and, in any case, not be in contradiction with the "European Charter for Access to Research Infrastructures". In particular, access to the research infrastructure should be provided on the scientific excellence principle to all European users without any discrimination against geographic origin, or scientific field as long as the research undertaken is aiming at peaceful purposes.
- The governance model of XCELS should allow participation of international partners (research infrastructures and research organizations, international bodies etc.) and their adequate representation in the governing bodies of XCELS. Selection of the top management of the research infrastructure should occur through a transparent and competitive process done at the international level.
- The scientific and technological activities of the research infrastructure should be periodically reviewed by advisory bodies involving national and international experts according to international standards. For instance, a Scientific Advisory Committee (**SAC**) for the scientific activities and a Technical or Machine Advisory Committee (**MAC**) should set into operation from the very beginning of the project to advise the project team and the management. XCELS could also consider setting up an Administration and Finance committee to advise the governing bodies on matters of governance, management and administration.

### 2.2 Legal aspects

- The legal framework under which the XCELS research infrastructure will be operated has to fully take into account the necessary harmonization with the European law and

Project duration: 01.09.2015-31.08.2018

allow participation of representatives of the European research infrastructures and European research community in its various governing and advisory bodies.

- The human resources and procurement policies should allow the involvement and contributions of European specialists, organizations, and of European industry on non-discriminatory and fair grounds.
- It might be beneficial to create a working group where Russian Federation's and European specialists can discuss in detail and assess the necessary legal steps to allow integration and cooperation of XCELS within the ERA.

### 2.3 Practical aspects

- The XCELS project team need to contact and initiate discussions with the key ERA players in the field of laser-based research and applications, namely the Laserlab Europe network and with the Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI), to identify possible ways of collaboration with them;
- As the XCELS project is interested in establishing long-term collaboration with the Extreme Light Infrastructure, the RAS is encouraged to establish contacts with the ELI-DC (and subsequently with the ELI-ERIC when established) in view of exploring the modalities of engagement and participation of the Russian Federation in the ELI-ERIC, possibly as a Strategic Partner.
- When establishing their Virtual User Office and User Management Platform, XCELS is invited to consider the best practices of European, and more generally international, RIs in the field.

### 2.4 Financial aspects

- In parallel with moving forward with the preparation of a Conceptual Design Report (**CDR**) and further of a Technical Design Report (**TDR**) of XCELS, the long-term financial sustainability of the XCELS infrastructure should be established by preparing a detailed business model and a business plan, according to the current European standards, namely supported by the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (**ESFRI**).
- Complete financial transparency should be implemented in the financial management of XCELS, ideally by adopting the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (**IPSAS**).
- An accountability framework should be designed and implemented with clear identifications of roles, rights and obligations of the various stakeholders involved in XCELS infrastructure construction and operation.

## 3. Conclusion

In the course of the CREMLIN project, the XCELS project promoters have initiated discussions together with other Beneficiaries and international experts to identify the critical policy, legal, practical and financial issues to be considered by the project management in order to confidently foresee an integration of XCELS in the European landscape of state-of-the-art research infrastructures. An Expert Round Table was organized on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 as a satellite event of the CREMLIN Closing conference hosted by DESY in Hamburg, Germany.

