



**Virtual Physiological Human Network of Excellence**  
Grant Agreement Number 223920

Work Package 2

Deliverable 2.7

**Second call/evaluation and selection of EPs  
(PM 23/24)**

Version 1.0

July 2010



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## Document Information

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<b>Abstract (for dissemination)</b>	<a href="#">This report presents the Second Call for Exemplar Projects and the results of the selection.</a>
<b>Keywords</b>	VPH, NoE, Exemplars

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## Executive Summary

WP2 is charged with organizing calls for new Exemplar Projects (EPs) each year of the NoE. This involved, first, the writing of an Exemplar Project Strategy Document (the EPSD, Deliverable 2.2 & 2.3) which describes the guidelines for EP selection and management. This involved the constitution of a selection committee (the EPEC, Exemplar Project Evaluation Committee), distribution of candidate proposals to referees (members of the Advisory Boards), and designation of selected projects. A budget of 500k€ over the duration of the NoE was earmarked for this purpose, managed by CNRS.

The first call for new EPs (Deliverables 2.4 & 2.5) was handled late in RP1 and resulted in the selection of a project (henceforth referred to as EP6) coordinated by EBI, Cambridge, entitled "Establishing ontology-based methods to improve interoperability between data and models for the VPH ToolKit: the Guyton case study", with partners at CNRS, University of Auckland, and University of Washington.

The second EP call took place in the Spring of 2010 and resulted in selection of the following projects:

- 1) "CIGENE: Integrating genetic theory and genomic data with multiscale models in a population context". coordinator: Stig W. Omholt, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (GM); Partners: UoA (CP), UOXF (CP). (subject to a budget adjustment)
- 2) "The NoE, Infrastructure and the Challenge of Call 6". coordinator: John Fenner, USFD (CP). Partners: UCL (CP), UPF (CP)
- 3) "VIP for VPH : Execution of medical image simulation workflows on DEISA through workflow interoperability between the Virtual Imaging Platform and the VPH toolkit". coordinator: Denis Friboulet, CNRS Créatis, Lyon (CP). Partners: UCL (CP). (subject to submission of a revision by the end of September 2010)

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# 1. Introduction

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This document first presents the text of the Call for Exemplars, and then gives the Minutes of the EPEC selection meeting.

## 2. Text of Second EP Call

### 2nd Call for new VPH Exemplar Projects in the VPH Network of Excellence

Submission deadline: May 15, 2010  
Notification of acceptance: no later than June 21, 2010  
Anticipated start date for selected projects: Sept 1, 2010

Proposals must be submitted electronically by sending a PDF file to:  
srthomas@ibisc.fr

#### Background

This is the second call for proposals for Exemplar Projects (EPs), activities that are intended to reinforce VPH ToolKit development (see the Exemplar Project Strategy Document, EPSD<sup>1</sup>).

The principal challenge we recognize in development of the VPH is the establishment of connections between domains of investigation with a view towards biomedical applications in a **sustainable, long-term environment, targeting re-use and interoperability**. Crucial to this are two factors: adherence to a set of reference standards (some still in progress) that constitute the core of the VPH Toolkit, and the need for Toolkit content to be of a sufficient quality that it will readily be accepted and used.

This leads to a set of Toolkit Attributes being considered as criteria relevant to the assessment of suggested Exemplar activities, and these are explained below. It should be stressed that not all attributes apply to all Toolkit content, but the absence of a relevant attribute would be considered a weakness in any proposal.

#### Tool Re-use

The VPH-NoE recognizes the importance of sophisticated, predictive, computational models of development and disease that encompass multiple biological scales, including especially the higher scales of the physiome (e.g., models of multi-cell systems, tissue, organ, multi-organ systems, organism structure and function). Linking lower scale data and models (e.g., models of genes, proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, signaling pathways and networks, metabolic pathways and networks, and molecular interactions at the cellular level) with higher scale models brings model development closer to predictive medicine. As stated in the DoW of the NoE, **it is explicitly NOT the role of the NoE to fund the development of such models or of new modeling techniques or algorithms**; the aim here is to reinforce, and indeed to enable, the **re-use, integration, and sharing** of such models and of the data they depend on and the information derived from their use in order to enable researchers and clinicians to better understand, prevent, diagnose and treat diseases or aberrations in normal development.

#### Call 2: Excellence and Sustainability

To these ends, this Second Call for VPH Exemplar Projects targets **proposals that meet the requirements for excellent, sustainable Toolkit content**. *All proposals must strive for this target by adhering, as far as possible, to the Toolkit Attributes given below. In addition, it was decided at last autumn's NoE meeting to solicit proposals in one or more areas of special focus that have been identified as particularly important at this point in the development of the Toolkit; these are described below in "Areas of special interest".*

## Call 2 Toolkit Attributes

Tabulated here are the attributes for toolkit content that are seen as contributing to the overall target for Excellence and Sustainability, and which should each be addressed by all submissions for Call 2 funding:

Attribute	Description
<b>Sustainable</b>	Will endure perhaps indefinitely, due to user uptake, funding, curation, follow-up, nature of topic, design approach, versatility, etc.
<b>Standards-based</b> <i>Markup languages</i> <i>Ontologies</i> <i>Signal formats</i> <i>Imaging formats...</i>	Outputs should avoid non-standard methods, and should adhere to and utilize wherever possible existing international standards and especially, as they become available, the <b>VPH reference standards</b>
<b>Generalised</b>	Tools should be developed in such a way that they will encourage uptake.
<b>Demonstrably necessary</b>	Applicants should write a compelling case. Is there evidence that the proposed outputs are desirable?
<b>Workflow compliant</b>	Outputs should be demonstrably capable of operating in a chain of such items, or (preferably) should themselves be such a chain, utilising pre-existing components
<b>Comprehensively documented</b>	No need for a help desk. Documentation should be professionally written, and it should provide examples.
<b>Infrastructure-supportive</b>	Designed to work within, preferably enhance, VPH infrastructures for the creation, curation, dissemination and exploitation of content
<b>Regulation-aware</b>	It is appreciated that bringing tools to clinical acceptance involves regulatory steps that can be daunting. It is not expected that output has passed all regulatory hurdles, but an awareness of this requirement must be demonstrated, and no content should preclude future regulatory approval.
<b>User-Friendly</b>	Content should be usable with relative ease by educated users. For example, in the case of an imaging tool, radiographers with no software development skills should be able to use the tool without further intervention.

Not all attributes are expected to feature in every submission. The degree to which the proposal meets the headline requirements of Sustainability and Excellence will determine the final ranking.

## Call 2 Areas of Special Interest

*All proposals that demonstrate adherence to the tabulated Attributes are welcome and will be considered.* It is hoped that some of the proposals will address one of the following special interest focus areas:

- (1) **The development of VPH workflows:** Workflows, the orchestration and automation of a series of simple tasks, are an essential component of the VPH context, and indeed the majority of VPH projects implicitly involve multiple workflows. Examples

can be found in the VPH RoadMap/Vision document<sup>1</sup>. These workflows, once constructed, should be easily extendable to access many different types of data sources and applications running on various platforms that can be performed interoperably across a variety of different infrastructures. Minimum features of an appropriate workflow environment are:

- Should ideally fit into a patient-specific, clinically-oriented scheme
- In use by other VPH project(s)
- Integrated with other tools (e.g., for running workflows on HPC resources, access to remote data sources, etc)
- Share workflows through a repository system
- User-friendly interface (e.g., web portal) for running workflows
- Highly flexible in terms of what workflows can be defined

It is not expected that EPs will necessarily address a whole workflow from clinical diagnosis, through modeling & analysis, to therapeutic procedures, but each EP should provide relevant ToolKit content by linking at least two individual components within any given workflow.

Examples of such ToolKit-desirable material include, but are not limited to:

- Projects that address interoperability among image simulators and image analysis software
- Compatibility between organ models and simulators,
- Transparent access to computing (HPC and HTC) and storage resources,
- Combination of multiple Finite Element Analysis/ Computational Fluid Dynamics (FEA/CFD) models,
- Coupling FEA/CFD and non-CFD calculations, imaging outputs passing through computational chains, patient-specific customization (typically by mapping processes) of generic models, etc.

Applicants are encouraged to use tools within the VPH Toolkit (for example, GSEngine) to develop examples of "generic workflows", and to contribute back the components and workflows that they develop to the Toolkit.

**(2) Development of data infrastructure:** Providing researchers routine access to biomedical and clinical data and providing a common repository for models are essential steps in enabling VPH research to progress from the lab to the clinic. For clinical data, issues relating to anonymisation, curation, ethics, and keeping research datasets synchronized with updates to live clinical databases need to be solved in a generic way that is usable by \*all\* VPH researchers. For biomedical data (both signals and images), adherence to standards for data formats and for metadata is important in order to foster reuse and sharing. For model repositories, a common procedure for specification of metadata (independent of the formalisms used in the models) is necessary to enable effective searching of the available resources. Projects that address these data needs, and intend to contribute the tools and systems developed to the VPH Toolkit, are encouraged. Such projects should seek to deploy their data systems at a minimum of two distinct, administratively and geographically separate sites belonging to different institutions, in order to demonstrate their real-world translational research benefits.

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In the framework of the current VPH NoE EPs call priorities, such initiatives would represent a step forward for the long-term sustainability of medical research, by providing the community with powerful validation and investigation tools.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://vph.ercim.eu/vph-repository/doc\\_download/137-vph-vision-a-strategy-submitted-141209-3](http://vph.ercim.eu/vph-repository/doc_download/137-vph-vision-a-strategy-submitted-141209-3)

In the selection process, special attention will be paid to proposals ensuring the openness of the resulting environment/infrastructure, as well as the production of a demonstrator, which must be included as deliverable of the project.

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### **General requirements**

Proposals will be required to provide as much as possible of the following (in addition to maximum adherence to the above-defined Toolkit Attributes):

- 1.- A demonstrator: Ideally something used by "real users" not just the developers
- 2.- A timeline for implementation of declared Milestones and Deliverables
- 3.- Demonstrable collaboration with the WP3 team (especially for data sharing, model markup, and the like). Otherwise, if this collaboration is new, the project should appropriately address this issue in the proposal.
- 4.- Description of the project workflows, how tools were linked together, what standards made this possible, etc.
- 5.- Contribution of tools to the ToolKit portal, with specification of their level of validation and conformance to (or if nothing suitable exists for their area, development of) ToolKit attributes (models/data/ontologies). Hence the need for direct interaction with the WP3 team. NB: VPH tools should be open source, downloadable by all and, ideally, distributed under an open license.

### **Who can apply?**

- The applicant for funds (also called the Principal Investigator [PI] Institution herein) must be an NoE Core or General Member (collaborations with Associate Members are encouraged, but they may not receive NoE funds)

### **Review & Selection Process**

- Proposals will be sent to external reviewers within one week after the submission deadline.
- Applicants should indicate three potential reviewers; they may also list the name of \*one\* person whom they do not wish to have review their proposal <sup>2</sup>.
- Each proposal will be assigned to a rapporteur on the EP Evaluation Committee (EPEC).
- Approximately 5 weeks after the submission date, the EPEC will convene for evaluation of the proposals. At this time, the rapporteurs will present the proposals and external reviewers' comments to the full EPEC.
- Decisions of the EPEC will be final and cannot be appealed. The decisions will be sent out on the next working day following the EPEC meeting. Selected projects will have approximately two months before the start date, in order to allow them time to search for candidates for the funded position.

### **Financing, Intellectual Property, etc.**

- An allocation will be accorded to the PI institution of each selected EP, to be spent for salary of a "postdoc/research assistant" (real/direct costs, no overheads) for a period of 6 or 12 months (to be determined during the EP review process, based on individual project requirements); the proposal must specify the cost per person-month at the PI institution.
- It is unnecessary to furnish administrative details (except for contact details) of any other parties involved in the project

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<sup>2</sup> There will be no obligation to call on the proposed reviewers

- EC rules that apply to sharing of resources [from the Consortium Agreement, section 7.3.6]: *"All payments for supporting Exemplar Projects shall be made directly to the institution concerned by CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE reimbursing, with funds drawn from the Exemplar Project Budget, 100% of real and actual costs incurred with no additional overheads paid to the institution concerned. Reimbursement shall be made for salary and travel and subsistence only. In all cases, reimbursement shall only be made provided that a corresponding active unspent budget is available in the Exemplar Project Budget and it has been allocated for the given expenditure to the concerned institution with decision of the Steering Committee. Payments are subject to the provision of original receipts or invoices and proof of authorization to pay provided by the Steering Committee. CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE shall be responsible for processing these claims in an efficient manner and will enter the amounts as part of its cost claims to the EC."*
  - Note : this procedure does not preclude the possibility of pre-payment of a portion of the EP budget, in cases where the PI institution would otherwise be unable to hire the personnel promptly for the EP.
- Issues of Intellectual Property, Security, etc. covered in the Consortium Agreement and in the General and Associate Membership Agreements, and which will not be recalled here, apply to the EPs.
- As with any EC project, payment of the full allocation will be subject to fulfillment of projected Deliverables as specified in the project timetable.

#### **Content & Form of the Application:**

- Names and institutional details for project partners
- Specify the estimated cost of a postdoc for the PI institution in Euro per month
- Specify how the project is presently financed and whether this funding will continue over the duration of the EP involvement in NoE
- Letter of support from the Head of the Department, confirming that the funded post will be given the usual levels of support and access to necessary space and facilities
- Project Description (**10 pages max., 11pt. Arial or Geneva font**)
  - *Project Summary*: The proposal must begin with a summary (not more than one page) suitable for publication and giving a self-contained description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded. The summary should be written in the third person and include a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. It should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and, insofar as possible, understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.
  - *Table of Contents*
  - *Project Description—should include the following sections*
    - Description of the ongoing project (i.e., the project already funded by other sources), with emphasis on the manner in which the project would satisfy the aims of the call (see above).
    - Motivation for linking to the VPH ToolKit development.
    - Proposed contributions to be made to ToolKit development (e.g., "marked up" models, databases, benchmark datasets, standards compliance, infrastructure components...).
    - Potential biomedical implications.
    - Specification of Milestones and Deliverables, with a timeline for their implementation.
  - *List of the most relevant publications by the project team (no more than 10 per partner laboratory)*

## Evaluation and Followup

Once underway, EPs will provide regular reports (at least every two months) in short bullet point form of progress made, challenges faced, successful accomplishment of agreed Milestones and Deliverables, and plans for the next period.

Close coordination is expected to be established from the outset with appropriate members of the WP3 ToolKit team. Interactions with WP3 should take the form of verifiable minuted contact (telephone/video conference/in person) with goals and outputs arising from these.

A final report must be compiled and submitted in the form of an 'EP Case Study' to the WP2 & WP3 coordinators 18 months after the start date. The timing for official reports (based on the NoE DoW) is as follows:

- EP Call 2: monitoring (PM 30,36) and final report (PM42)

## Contacts, mailing addresses...

WP2 Coordinator: S. Randall Thomas <[srthomas@ibisc.fr](mailto:srthomas@ibisc.fr)>

WP3 Coordinator: Keith McCormack <[k.m.mccormack@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:k.m.mccormack@sheffield.ac.uk)>

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## Links:

- 1) EPSD: [http://www.vph-noe.eu/vph-repository/doc\\_download/50-vph-noe-exemplar-project-strategy-document](http://www.vph-noe.eu/vph-repository/doc_download/50-vph-noe-exemplar-project-strategy-document)
- 2) RTAE: [http://www.vph-noe.eu/vph-repository/doc\\_download/51-vph-noe-requirements-and-technology-assessment-exercise](http://www.vph-noe.eu/vph-repository/doc_download/51-vph-noe-requirements-and-technology-assessment-exercise)
- 3) VPH Roadmap/Vision document: [http://vph.ercim.eu/vph-repository/doc\\_download/137-vph-vision-a-strategy-submitted-141209-3](http://vph.ercim.eu/vph-repository/doc_download/137-vph-vision-a-strategy-submitted-141209-3)

### 3. Review Criteria for EP Call 2, 2010

[The following instructions were sent to the referees for the EP Call 2 proposals]

#### Introduction

The VPH Network of Excellence is an EC-funded initiative established to promote the awareness of activities within the context of the 'Virtual Physiological Human', to build a community of interested practitioners and to establish a repository of resources (software tools, computer models and physiological data) known as 'The ToolKit', the responsibility for which ultimately rests with NoE Workpackage #3.

Amongst the NoE's activities is the funding of Exemplar Projects, in which small amounts of funding are provided to reinforce the ToolKit. It is stressed that the NoE funding is expressly NOT intended to support the research activity itself. **You have kindly agreed to review a submitted proposal for such an Exemplar Project**, and we would ask you to examine the proposal carefully and then complete the following table, adding your comments in the column Text Comments (as brief or extended as you wish), and a score in the final column (guidance is provided, low = worse, high = better, in all cases). Where a 'Max' score is indicated, you may score any value up to this maximum, based on your assessment of the degree to which the criterion is fulfilled.

Please deal only with the technical & scientific content of the proposal; conformance with administrative rules is the responsibility of the Exemplar Project Evaluation Committee.

<b>Proposal Title:</b>	
<b>Coordinating Institution:</b>	
<b>Partner Institutions:</b>	

#	Topic	Criterion	Text Comments (no limit on length of comments)	Score	
1	<b>Toolkit</b>	<b>To what extent does the proposal aim to use and/or contribute to the VPH Toolkit? Please use the following criteria (full details are appended)</b>		Max. Score of 2 for each of the points well-addressed Your score:	
	1a	Sustainable			Your score:
	1b	Standards-based			Your score:
	1c	Generalised			Your score:
	1d	Demonstrably necessary			Your score:
	1e	Comprehensively documented			Your score:
	1f	Regulation-aware			Your score:
	1g	User-friendly			Your score:
2	<b>Workflow /Data</b>	How does the project address the development of VPH Workflows or Data Infrastructure? [It does not: 0 points It addresses either or both: Max 10 Please use the whole range of points available. Projects judged "excellent" in this section should be getting 9 to 10, very good 7 to 8, good 5 to 6, poorly addressed should be getting 4 or lower]		Your score:	
3	<b>General</b>	<b>Based on the categories below (see detail appended), please allocate 2 points for each point addressed in the proposal</b>		Max 2 points for each item addressed Your score:	
	3a	A demonstrator, ideally operable by end users			Your score:
	3b	A timeline with milestones & deliverables			Your score:
	3c	Demonstrable collaboration with NoE WP3			Your score:
	3d	Description of workflows/data infrastructure			Your score:
	3e	Contribution of tools to the			Your score:

#	Topic	Criterion	Text Comments (no limit on length of comments)	Score
		ToolKit		

4. Overall comments: In addition to the above points, please give a brief description of your opinion of the proposal. Among whatever issues you mention, please include the following:
- How does the proposed contribution compare to other work in the field with which you are familiar. Is it original and innovative, or can similar resources be found elsewhere?
  - General impression concerning the degree of interest of the project for VPH ToolKit development, and for moving it in the direction of concrete applicability.
  - Feasibility of the project within the time period proposed, and the clarity of outcomes.

## 4. EP Call 2 selection meeting instructions

*[Thursday, June 24, at 15:00 (Paris time), for about two hours, the EPEC selection committee met by téléconference for the EP selection meeting. The committee was sent the following instructions for the procedure during the meeting.]*

We should hope to fund up to two projects this time (perhaps three if we judge three to be really excellent contributions to the toolkit).

In hopes of having an efficient meeting, here's the suggested agenda:

Before the meeting:

•) Based on the proposal texts and referees' evaluations (sent last Saturday), representatives of each core partner institution should work out a preliminary ranking of the proposals.

NB: given the inevitable conflicts of interest due to the nature of the EP system, it is suggested that no one shall be permitted to vote for a proposal in which (s)he is a participant.

During the meeting:

0) Rollcall, in which each partner institution present designates the person who will vote for their institution.

1) After rollcall, the WP2 coordinator (SRT) summarizes the procedure for the meeting (i.e., the present message), and then we establish a preliminary ranking of the proposals, as follows:

a) *\*Vote for First Place:\** For each proposal in turn, we go around the table and ask the representative for each Core Partner institution "Do you consider this to be the most worthy proposal to be financed." No one may cast a vote for a proposal in which (s)he is a participant, so the total number of voters will be different for each proposal. The highest rank is then given to the proposal with the highest percentage of Yes votes, i.e., (number of Yes votes on proposal X)/(number of voters on proposal X). SRT and MM will both keep track of the votes.

b) *\*Vote for Second Place:\** We repeat the process with the question, "Of the remaining proposals, do you consider this one the best?". This gives us the second-best proposal.

c) Same process to choose to rank the rest of the proposals.

2) MM will then chair the presentations by the Rapporteurs. Each rapporteur will summarize "his" proposal and the referees' comments (in approx. 5 minutes, please, since everyone is familiar with all the proposals), followed by round-the-table comments, i.e., each partner in turn makes concise comments (trying to limit this to 10 minutes total per proposal).

NB: those with a conflict of interest must remain silent during discussion of a proposal.

3) Repeat round of the ranking process once more as in step (1), asking for each proposal "Is this proposal the one that most merits to be funded?" The two with the highest scores (ratio of Yeses/voters) will be selected. In the case of a tie, one last runoff round will be done.

4) We're done. Should take less than two hours total for the meeting.

After the meeting:

- 1) The Rapporteur for each proposal will write a short summary for the coordinator of the proposal, explaining succinctly the decision that was made. These summaries should be sent to SRT by Saturday, June 26, while it is still fresh in everybody's mind, and he will send them on to each of the proposal coordinators individually, along with the referees' comments.

## 5. Minutes of the EPEC selection meeting

# Minutes of the Exemplar Project Evaluation Committee (EPEC) Selection Meeting

Thursday, 24 June 2010

15:00-17:20 Continental Time (conference call)

### *14 EPEC Members present:*

SRT - Randy Thomas, CNRS-IBISC (Chair)

MM - Miriam Mendes, UCL (Program Office)

PVC - Peter Coveney, UCL

PK - Peter Kohl, UOXF

SVSJ - Serge Van Sint Jan, ULB

MS - Maxime Sermesant, INRIA

JK - John King, UNOTT

JBR – Jesus Bisbal Riera, UPF

PH - Peter Hunter, UoA

BdB - Bernard de Bono, EBI

KM – Keith McCormack, USFD

JS – John Skar, KI

FS – Ferran Sanz, IMIM

YT – Yanni Tollis, ERCIM

### *Absent:*

MV – Marco Viceconti, IOR

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### Brief Summary

EP Call 2 was launched on March 17, with a deadline of May 15 for receipt of proposals. Seven proposals were received and each was sent to three external referees (where possible, referees were members of the NoE Advisory Boards)

The EP Evaluation Committee met by conference call on June 24 and selected three new Exemplar Projects for funding.

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Seven proposals were received for call 2 of the Exemplar Projects, which were assigned to the following rapporteurs:

<b>PI Institution</b>	<b>Est. Cost (€)</b>	<b>Rapporteur</b>
Univ. Lisbon	27830	S.R. Thomas (CNRS)
USFD	57816	P. Hunter (UoA)
CNRS	56400	P. Kohl (UOXF)
IMIM	67400	J. Tegner (KI)
UNICAM	36000	M. Sermesant (INRIA)
Norw. Univ. Life Sci.	105600	J. Skar (KI)
UPF	47520	J. Tegner (KI)

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The project titles were as follows, where membership status in the NoE is indicated as CP (Core Partner), GM (General Member), or AM (Associate Member):

- 1) "SSFMA: Semantic Similarity for the Foundational Model of Anatomy ontology". coordinator: Francisco M. Couto, Universidade de Lisboa (GM)  
Partners: EBI (CP), Charité (GM)
- 2) "The NoE, Infrastructure and the Challenge of Call6". coordinator: John Fenner, USFD (CP)  
Partners: UCL (CP), UPF (CP)
- 3) "VIP for VPH : Execution of medical image simulation workflows on DEISA through workflow interoperability between the Virtual Imaging Platform and the VPH toolkit". coordinator: Denis Friboulet, CNRS Créatis, Lyon (CP)  
Partners: UCL (CP)
- 4) "A GridSpace Engine-based workflow for multiscale modeling of drug safety". coordinator: Gianni de Fabritiis, IMIM (CP)  
Partners: UCL (CP)
- 5) "POP (from PDE to ODE and back) An integration tool for multiscale simulation". coordinator: Emanuela Merelli, University of Camerino (UNICAM) (GM)  
Partners: IOR (CP)
- 6) "CIGENE: Integrating genetic theory and genomic data with multiscale models in a population context". coordinator: Stig W. Omholt, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (GM)  
Partners: UoA (CP), UOXF (CP)
- 7) "Integra3D". coordinator: Jordi Villà i Freixa, UPF (CP)  
Partners: ULB (CP), Fraunhofer, Leeds, O2H

The meeting was opened by SRT, who indicated that administrative eligibility of PI institutions of all of the proposals had been verified. Given the wide range of estimated costs for the different proposals, it was decided to ignore financial estimates while discussing the proposals, with the understanding that this aspect would be checked in consultation with Marco Cortopassi for the finally selected proposal(s) to verify adherence to the "direct costs only/no overheads" stipulation in the DoW and EPSD. All proposals were judged to be technically eligible based on the criteria of involving NoE member institutions.

Each proposal was sent to three referees for evaluation, chosen from the NoE Advisory Boards or external expert reviewers. Despite several reminders, a number of evaluations were not in fact sent in, with the consequence that for two proposals we received only a single referee evaluation.

The meeting was organised as follows:

Step 0. Ahead of the meeting, all seven proposals were available for download by the EPEC, and the anonymized referee reports were sent by email to all members of the committee.

Step 1. SRT summarized the process

Step 2. Rollcall, designation of voters, and conflicts of interest and challenges were requested and resolved

Step 3. The Fundability threshold was decided at 2/3 of the voting members

Step 4. Projects were presented by the Rapporteurs, followed by round-the-table discussion of each project

Step 6. Fundability vote (all proposals except two were voted to be fundable)

Step 7. First Place vote

Step 8. Second Place vote

(NB: No one could cast a vote for which (s)he was conflicted)

It was underlined at the outset that we would aim to fund up to two projects (or exceptionally three).

The discussion happened as follows:

- ❖ The CIGENE received the most votes for first place and was thus selected for funding.
- ❖ The USFD and "VIP for VPH" projects received an equal number of votes for second place and USFD edged out VIP in a runoff vote, and it was thus decided to fund USFD, and then, after some discussion, it was decided to accept "VIP for VPH" provisionally, pending a revision, to be submitted by the end of September.

More detailed summaries of the EPEC conclusions concerning each of the proposals were sent to the respective PIs directly, along with the respective referees' comments.

The meeting closed at 17:20.