

STATEMENT REGARDING THE STATUS OF ELI-ALPS

In recent months ELI-ALPS begun a critical transition from construction to operations. There have been a number of changes at this critical stage, including changes in the management of the organisation. For such a large and ambitious project, this is understandable.

The recent appointment of Mr. László Jakab as Managing Director of ELI-HU Ltd., has stabilised the situation significantly. This conclusion comes after speaking with a number of stakeholders in Hungary related to ELI, including staff. I appreciate the effort the Hungarian Ministry for Technology and Innovation has made to ensure continued progress and to prevent disruption to the construction and delivery of the facility.

That effort is evident with the appointment of Prof. Katalin Varjú as the new Science Director. She has been working with ELI-ALPS since the preparatory phase. Her expertise in attosecond pulse production and user applications strengthens the mission of ELI ALPS during the critical time of transition to the operations phase.

I have led the ELI Delivery Consortium (ELI-DC) since July 2017. The Brussels-based consortium was established by the ELI Host countries with institutions from Italy, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The aim is to promote the sustainable development and coordinated implementation of the ELI research facilities in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Romania. To that end, the goal has always been to establish ELI as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ELI ERIC), a world-leading organisation that will operate and fund ELI with pan-European and international members.

Our partnership with the Hungarian Government and ELI-ALPS management has always been transparent and constructive, both regarding the organisational development and scientific implementation. They have been clear that the current priority is to evaluate the scientific and operational situation in ELI-ALPS. They have been very open to ELI-DC and its members and invited multiple views from the scientific community. To my knowledge, no decisions have been made to change the direction or scope of the facility.

The scientific aim of the facility as the world's leading laser-based facility for attosecond science is essential for the inclusion of the facility into the soon to be established ELI ERIC. The commitment from Hungary to maintain ELI-ALPS as a user facility as a part of ELI ERIC is essential and it will quickly become a world-leading science facility for international researchers.

The scientific potential of the facility should be realised in particular by the ELI Host countries. This is the justification for investing in the facility in the first place. The current 'Centre for Molecular Fingerprint' initiative and 'Transmutation' proposal led by the University of Szeged are just the type of projects one would expect to see being developed by the Host countries. These projects add scientific value as they are leveraging the user research capabilities of ELI ALPS through which they contribute to the operational costs of the facility, supporting the transition to ELI ERIC. Recent success in negotiations with the non-Host countries to join ELI ERIC are promising. Actions by Minister Palkovics to secure sustainable support for the facility are critical to its long-term success.



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