

Written by Richard Morton (Northumbria University, UK)  
Email: [richard.morton@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:richard.morton@northumbria.ac.uk)

Dear SOLARNET Partners and others,

I hope that you are well and safe during these unusual times.

As you are probably keenly aware, many governments have imposed restrictions on their countries inhabitants that have impacted upon our ability to carry out our regular day-to-day lives (both inside and outside of science). I know that many of you will be struggling to balance both commitments that lie within your work and home lives, adapting to new working arrangements and leaving less time than usual to carry out some of your responsibilities. Personally, I have to split time with my wife, sharing in caring for our daughter and working. Needless to say that I am not able to undertake all the parts of my workload that I normally would; I am sure a number of you are in similar situations. Hopefully, with the restrictions beginning to ease across Europe, we can start to regain some form of normality.

And, in all of this, I hope that you have also managed to find some positive experiences. I am grateful in having been able to spend some extra time with my family that my 'normal' life would not have afforded.

This version of the newsletter is intended to provide updates with regards to SOLARNET and how its activities have been impacted by COVID. The Executive Board met on the 29<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the best course of action for the upcoming activities. However, given the large uncertainty that exists around time-scales for the return to normal life, there are obviously some difficulties in making plans for the short-term.

The Project Office would also like to add that they hope that all our colleagues are safe and well. They would like to thank all partners and colleagues out there that keep the SOLARNET Project going under the current limitations. Preparations are continuing for the completion of the first reporting period, i.e. the first report to the EU is being compiled and the several deliverables will be ready soon.

### **Force Majeure Triggered**

Given the current circumstances, the Project Office has decided to trigger Article 51 – Force Majeure (full details of the article can be found in the grant agreement). With respect to SOLARNET, this means that we informed the European Commission (EC) that we may not be able to fulfil some of the obligations within the grant agreement – at least within the initially proposed time-scale. The project office informed the EC of any project deliverables that were known to be affected and likely to experience some form of delay. If you believe that you are involved with a deliverable that may be delayed, it is worthwhile contacting the appropriate work package leader to let them know.

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## **Meetings**

Given the travel restrictions in place, there have been a number of planned schools and workshops that have been postponed. These include:

- *'A holistic view of the solar atmosphere – combining space and ground-based observations'* that was due to be held in March 2020 at MSSL-UCL, UK – which is now due to take place in January 2021.
- *'Public Engagement Training Workshop'* that was due to be held in March 2020 at Northumbria University, UK. The new dates for this work as still to be confirmed.
- Two planned workshops on "Turbulence and Seeing" and "Instrumentation", both corresponding to milestones, have also had to be postponed.

At the recent Executive Board meeting, the decision was also taken to postpone the 1<sup>st</sup> SOLARNET Science Meeting. It was felt this decision was necessary given that it is still unclear when international travel might start to resume at a reasonable level, and also that many people might not want to travel. Hence, the *'Sun and Society Meeting'* due to be held in Venice, Italy in October will be postponed until 2021. This may have a potential knock on effect for 2<sup>nd</sup> SOLARNET Science meeting that was originally scheduled to take place in Potsdam, Germany in 2021.

There is also the *'High-resolution solar observations'* school due to take place in Graz, Austria due to begin on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. The organizers have decided the best course of action with the school is to postpone until a later date. The new dates will be communicated in due to course.

And finally, a decision was made that the *'Week above the Clouds 2020'* will, unfortunately, be cancelled. Given the observing schedules at the VTT and Gregor, it would not be possible to re-arrange.

## **Mobility Program**

The SOLARNET Mobility Program was also affected by the restrictions on movement. The second call for the Mobility Program had awarded 3 early career and 3 senior researchers grants for travel. By early March, travel plans had been made by a number of the recipients and a few had begun their visits to the host institutions. However, most of the visits had to be cut short, and some were delayed until travel can be resumed. The Project Office and Francesca Zuccarello (WP3 Leader - *Università di Catania*) are in contact with the grant recipients and deciding the best course of action.

## Trans-national Access Program

With all this disappointing news, we are very happy to report on a fantastic success for the SOLARNET Trans-national Access Program. Just as most of Europe was going into lockdown in April, PI-led campaigns were due to begin taking place at the Swedish Solar Telescope on La Palma. The PIs were unable to fly due to restrictions, however the SST support astronomer, Pit Sütterlin, had landed in La Palma just before they came in to place. Through a momentous effort, Pit was able to wake the SST from its winter hibernation. Then, with the help of Stockholm's experienced service observer, Gregal Vissers, the campaigns were transformed into a service mode campaigns, with Pit undertaking all the observations by himself. Data was obtained for both the PIs by the end of April and is being reduced for them by Olexa Andriienko. This is a great effort by the Stockholm team to keep the Trans-national Access Program going despite the chaos, and we thank them for their tenacity and dedication.



## SOLARNET calls still open

We would like to remind everyone that the SOLARNET calls for support are still open, with deadlines approaching.

1. *Piz Daint Supercomputer*. Preliminary proposal submission/registration deadline with title plus names and contact information for the PI and any Co-I's is May 31<sup>st</sup> 2020. There is second submission deadline for the full proposal on September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Details: <https://solarnet-project.eu/2nd-Call-for-Proposals-Piz-Diant-Supercomputer>

2. *Mobility Programme for young & experienced researchers* - deadline May 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.  
Details: <https://solarnet-project.eu/application-form>