



# Developing effective communication in science collaborations:

#### Diverse forms of teamwork

#### Dr. Darko Donevski

Assistant Research Professor in Astrophysics & Science Writer

NCBJ, AstroGroup, Warsaw
 SISSA, Astrophysics Group, Trieste



darko.donevski@ncbj.gov.pl



www.darkodonevski.com

## Biography mapping...

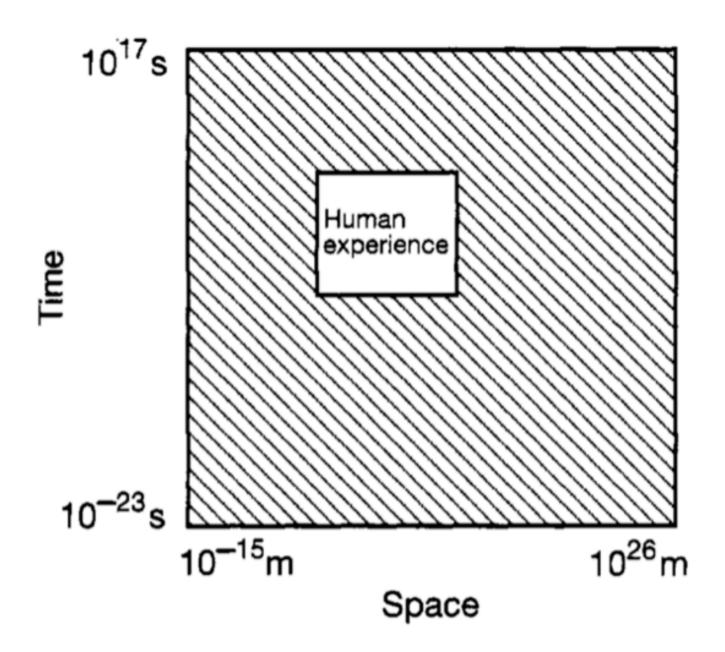




Where I studied/worked



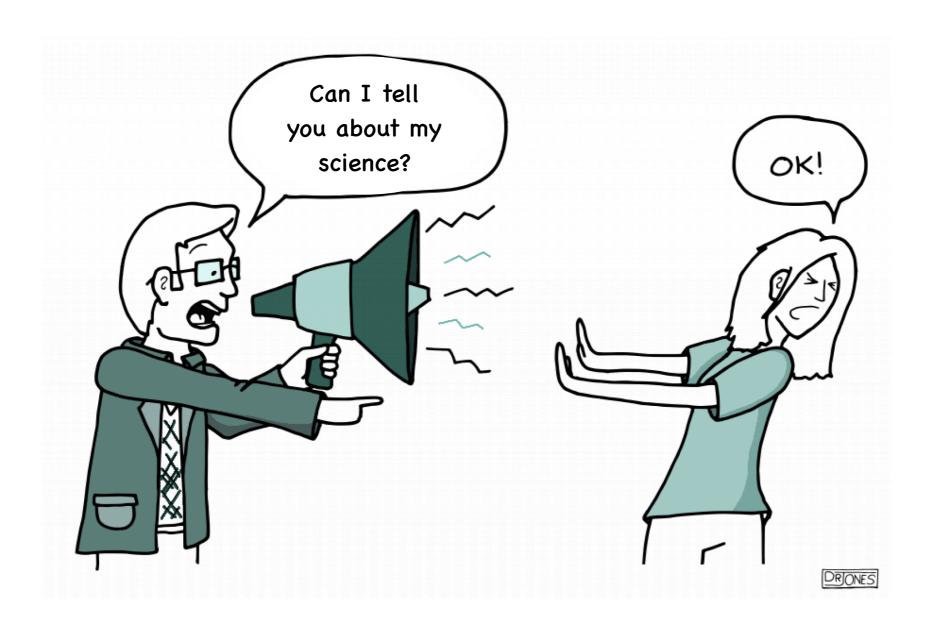
Where are the telescopes I use



**Figure 1.1:** Human experience of space and time in the physical world.

credit: R. Blin-Stoyle, Eureka

## ... and how?



3. Example 4

#### Content

1. International science collaborations

Benefits and challenges

2. Elements of collaborations
Principles and applications

3. From ideas to discoveries

Behind the scenes of collaborative research

4. Global perspective



45 min questions

45 min questions

45 min questions

General discussion



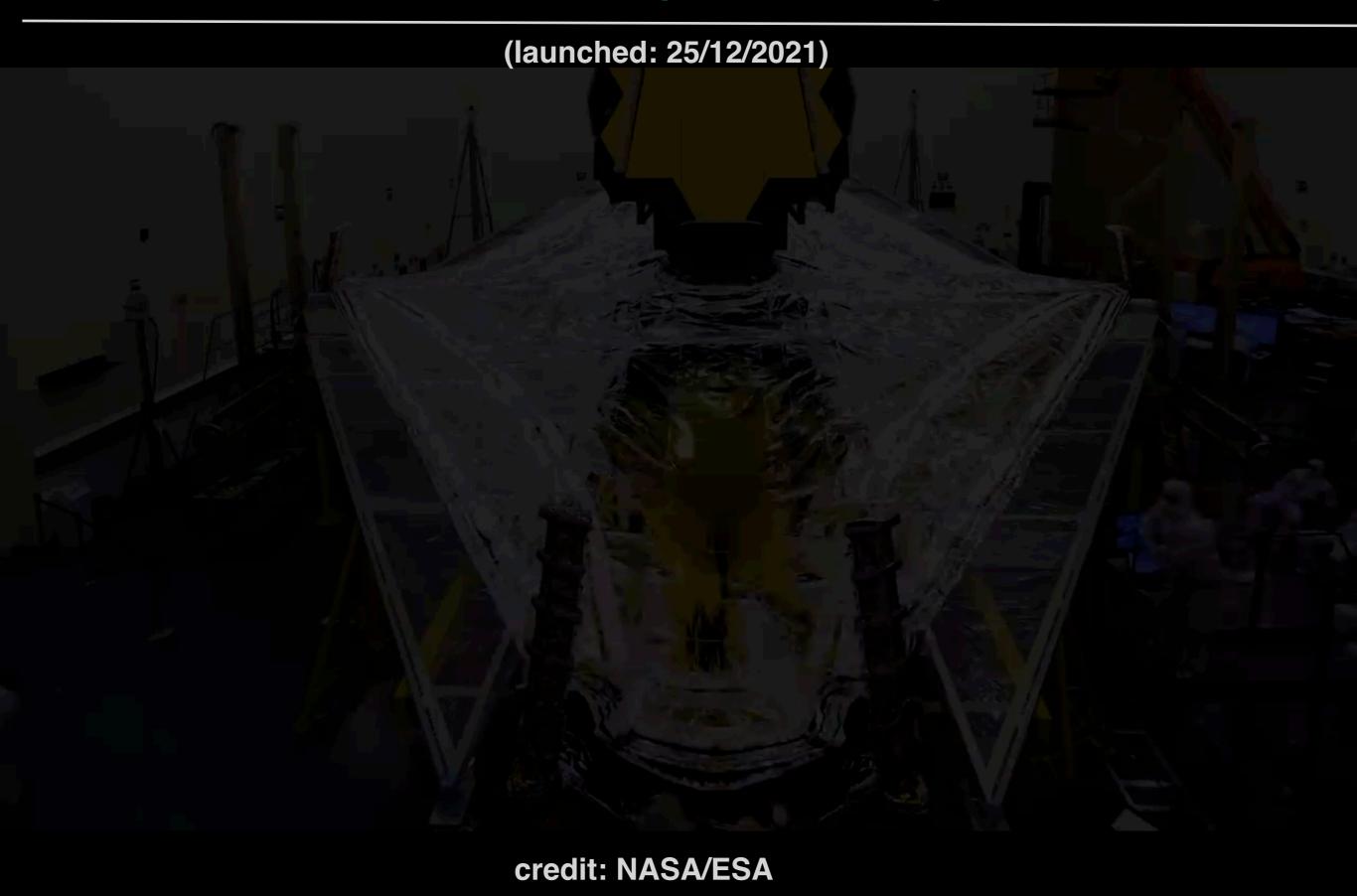
## Part I

#### **International collaborations:**

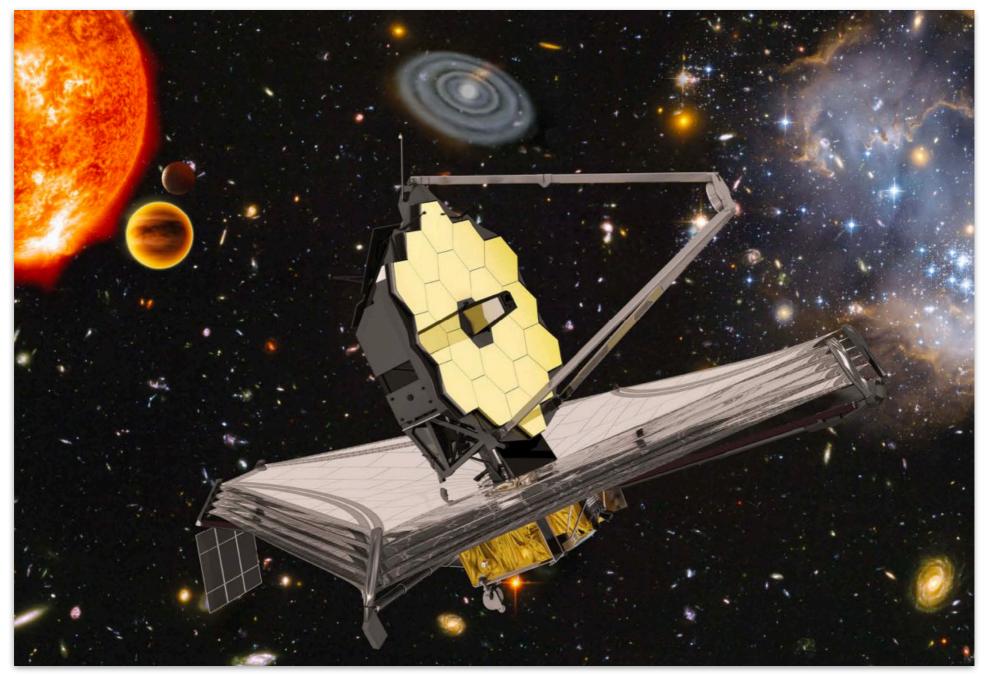
## benefits & challenges



## **James Webb Space Telescope**



• Acquiring the data in astronomy and cosmology is very competitive process.



James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)

• Acquiring the data in astronomy and cosmology is very competitive process.

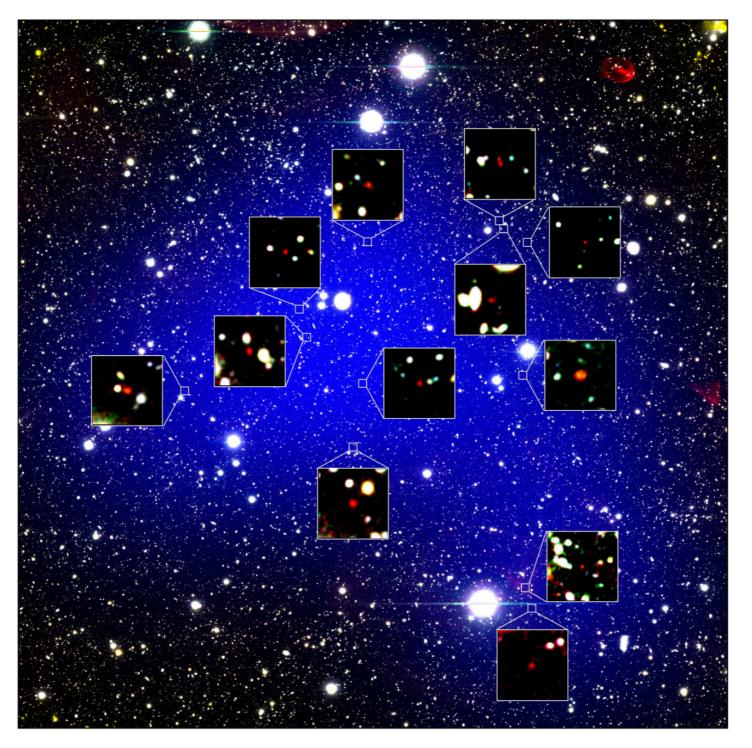


#### **ALMA** proposals

(credit: ESO)

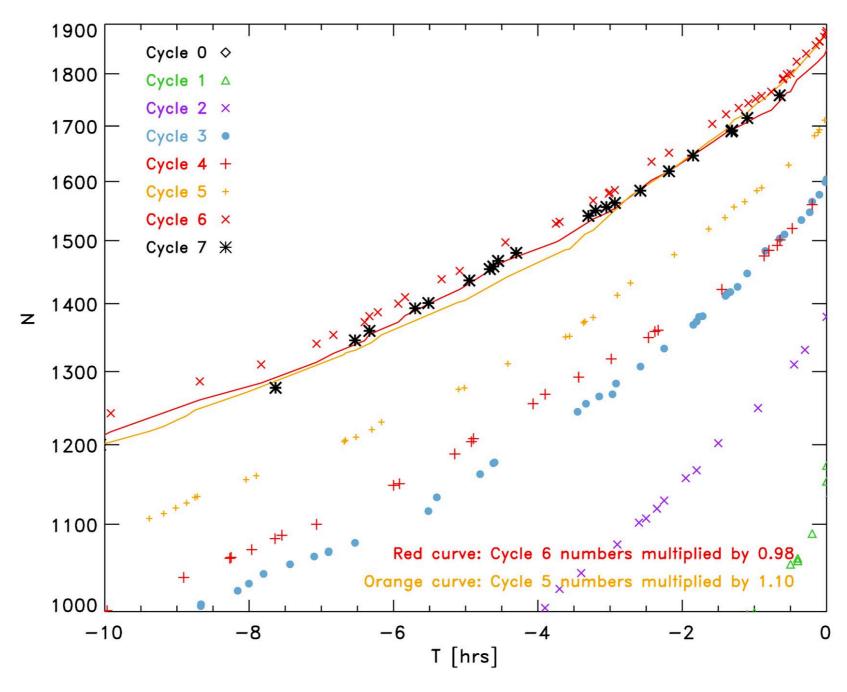
Acquiring the data in astronomy and cosmology is very competitive

process.



Beautiful galaxies are contained in very expensive data (~ 100 000 \$)

• Acquiring the data in astronomy and cosmology is very competitive process.



#### **ALMA** telescope proposals

(credit: ESO)

• D.Donevski: Interview with the Nobel prize laureate, Barry Barish (magazine: Elementi 20)



"Science collaboration is building bridges!" (B. Barish)

• D.Donevski: Interview with the Nobel prize laureate, Barry Barish (magazine: Elementi 20)



"We try to understand the Universe, but at the same time we yet have to understand how to communicate" (B. Barish)

• D.Donevski: Interview with IAU inspiration medal winner, M. Povic (magazine: Elementi 25)



"Collaborations are windows to the world for (African) scientists." (M. Povic)

• D.Donevski: Interview with awarded author Rosemary Sullivan (magazine: Elementi 21)



"Nobody knows everything! We need collaborations to replace the myth of a lone genius!" (Rosemary Sullivan)

• D.Donevski: Towards the new horizons (portal Elementarium, 2016) Interview with prof. Richard Binzel (NASA New Horizons Mission co-I)

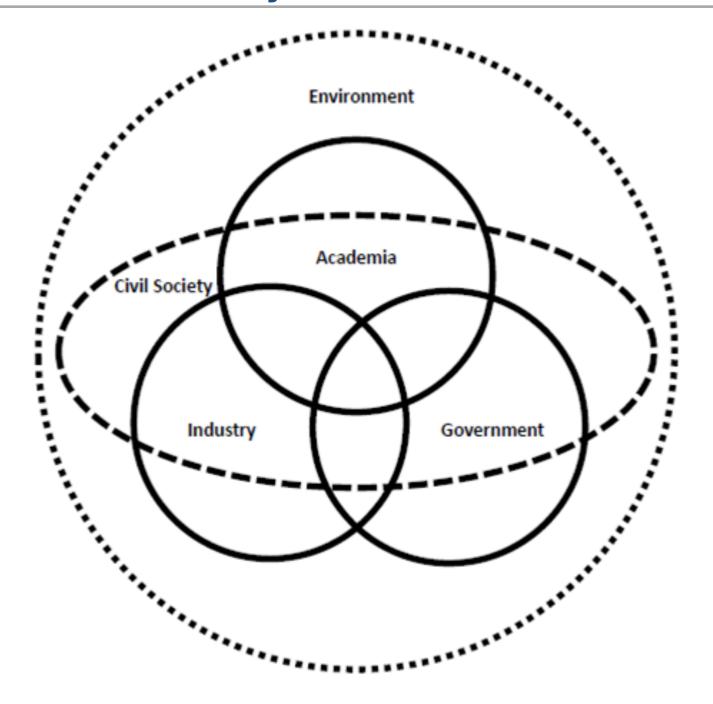


"Evolution of science collaboration changes the way science is funded" (Richard Binzel)

• D.Donevski: Dynamics of dusty places (magazine: Elementi 22)



""I prefer my science be like a good old wine - alone, untouched in the basement!" (unnamed astronomer)



credit: C. Swartz

Collaborations are important for "smart co-evolutions" & sustainable development!

#### 1.2 Types of collaborations

- Intergovermental (e.g., European Space Agency ESA, CERN)
- International collaboration started from big multinational funds (e.g., ESO)
- International collaborations between national agencies (e.g., James Webb Space Telescope, Herschel telescope, ISS)
- •International collaborations started from individual grants ( this talk)
- International collaboration started from interested individuals (various funding sources, not always specific for the proposed project)
- Multi (Institute-industry-governmental) collaborations
- Collaborations between academia & community (e.g., citizen science)

### 1.3 Benefits and challenges

1. Science as a global endevour (dynamical relations amongst scientists worldwide)

2. Way to afford expensive infrastracture (e.g., state-of-the-art telescopes, accelerators...)



4. Way to foster greater understanding, respect trust and knowledge

• Many fields developed unique culture of collaboration...



#### 1.3 Benefits and challenges

... but, there are also various challenges!



- Institutions are organised by <u>traditional boundaries</u>...
- ... and complex problems often need <u>approach that</u> "converges" in a non-traditional way!

#### 1.3 Benefits and challenges

... but, there are also various challenges!

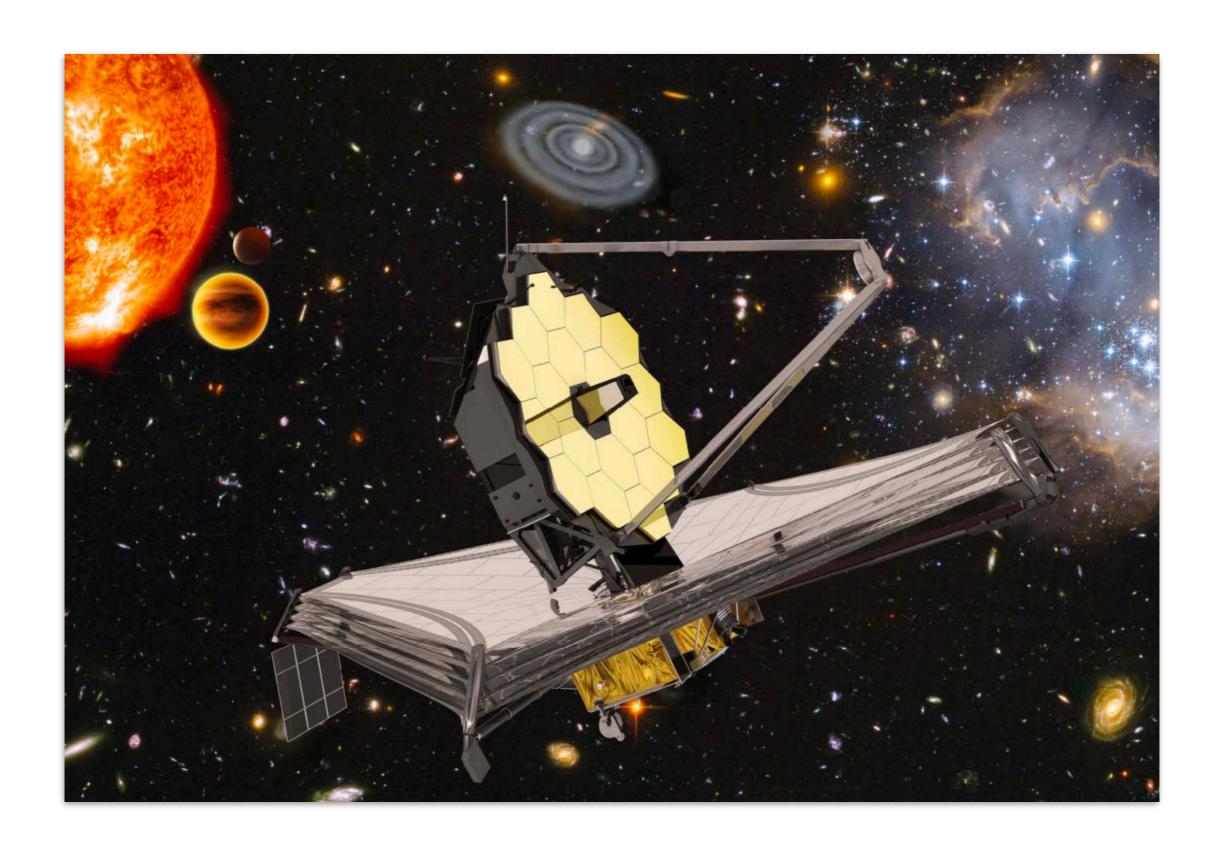


- How to allow healthy debate in diverse environment? (e.g., How to ensure that each idea has equal weight!)
- How to make collaboration a safe space?
   (in particular for women and scientists from underrepresented groups)
- How to benefit from cross-cultural collaborations?

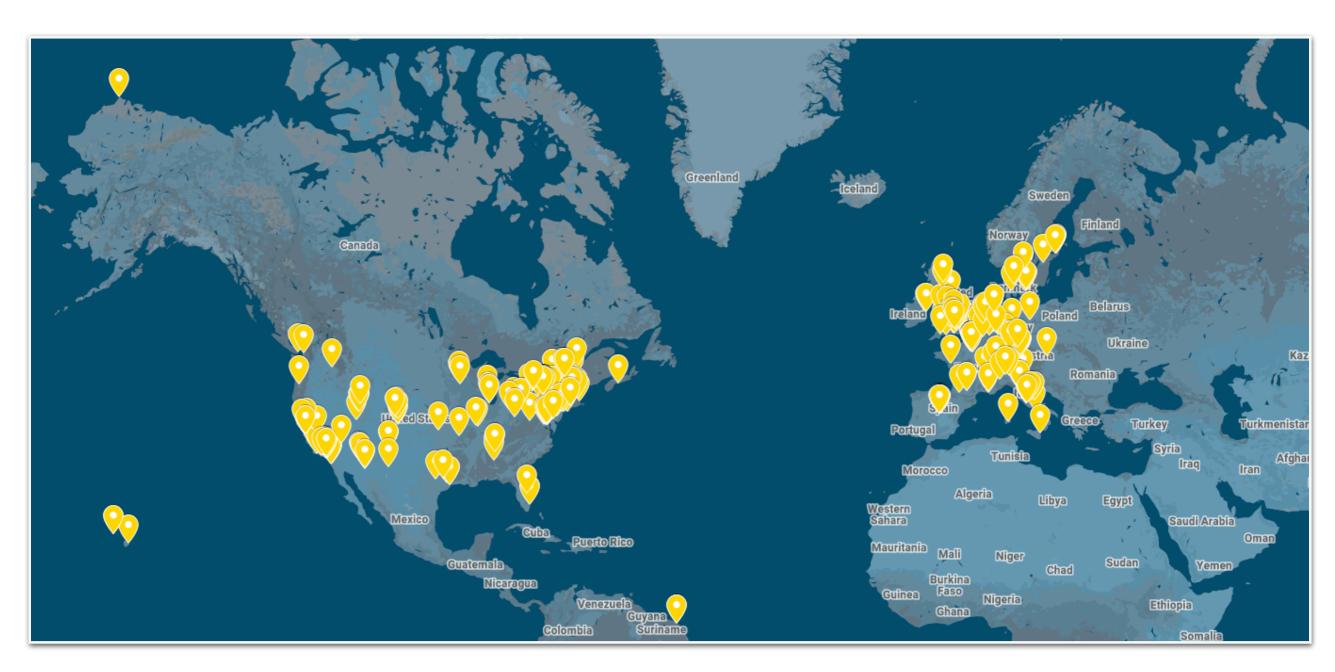
  ("Globalization does not mean the end of difference, but that we now have to deal with difference directly instead of at a distance", R. Nollan, Purdue Univ.)

23

## 1.4 An example: JWST



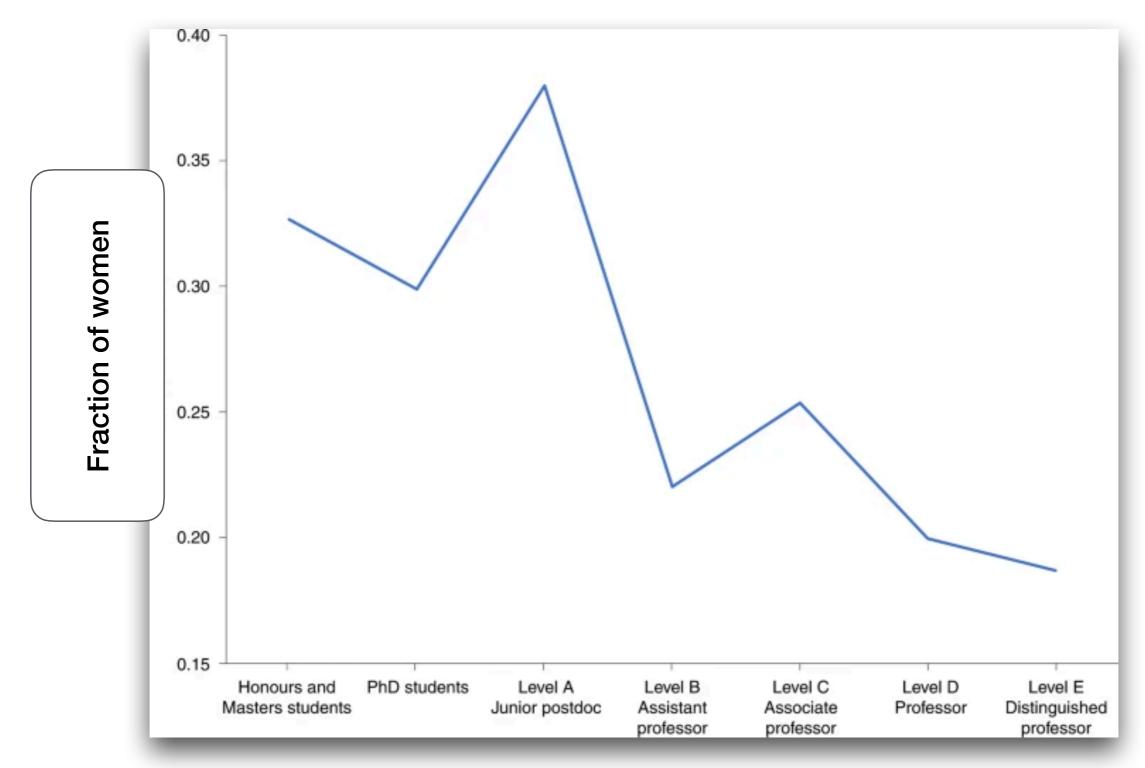
## 1.4 An example: JWST











Fraction of women at university levels in Australian astronomy (L. Kewley, Nature Astronomy 5, 2021)

26

International collaborations are full of opportunities...

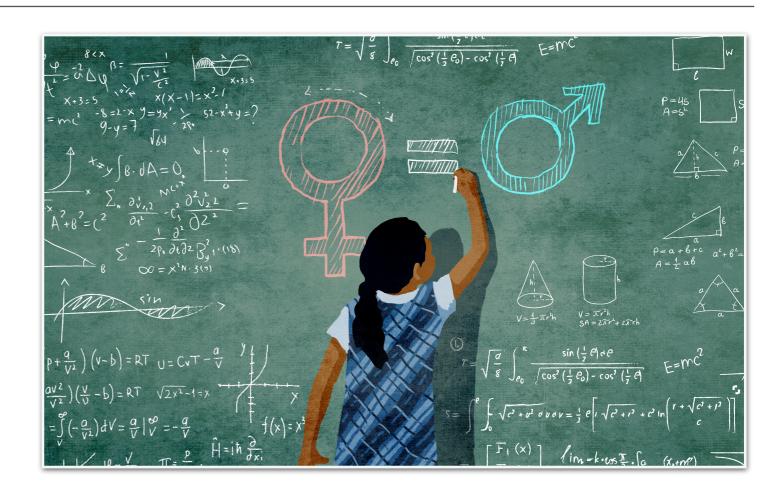




... but can be precarious teritory for women and scientists from underrepresented countries/groups...

#### Gender gap

 Breaking into the 'male dominating networks' of senior scientists can be difficult for women.



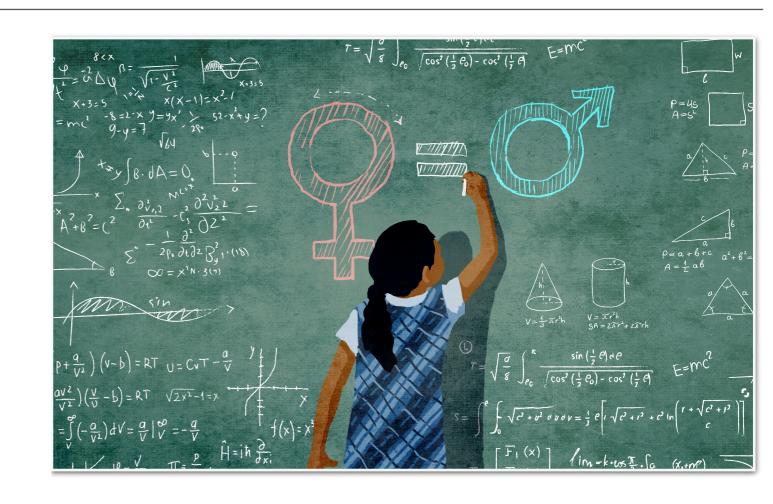
International collaborations are full of opportunities...





• ... but can be precarious teritory for women and scientists from underrepresented countries/groups...

- Boosting the % of minorities in collaborations is difficult task (no systematic support, no equal starting opportunitity etc.)
- Gender/Minorities face increased risks of harassment! (AAS research, 2021)





Change of work culture!

That's just what influenced me a lot. Although books of Strugacki "Monday starts on Saturday" with the idea that your love for science should be so strong that you don't have any desire to take a break on the weekend...

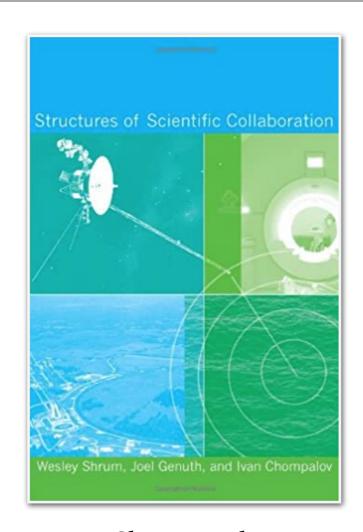
Did you know that it took 5 years to reduce, analyze, and interpret these 3 first images of black holes? I can't tell how many telecons/meetings/discussions it took, it was almost a nonstop work. #ourblackhole #eht M87 Polarized **M87** Sgr A\* 2019 2021 2022 Credit: EHT Collaboration, 10 94

## **Useful starting references/overviews/reports...**





1. Introduction



**Shrum et al.**Structures of Scientific Collaborations

31

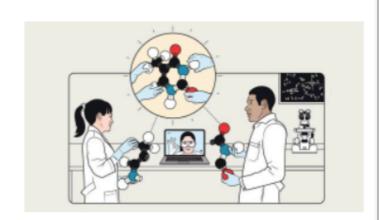
## Useful starting references/overviews/reports...

nature > special

Special 16 June 2021

#### How to collaborate in science

Science is a team effort, often straddling disciplines and regions. Research collaborations can foster greater understanding, respect trust and knowledge. These resources offer examples of how to keep collaborations harmonious and ensure that due credit is fairly assigned.



NEWS FEATURE | 16 June 2021

## How the COVID pandemic is changing global science collaborations

The pandemic and political tensions might slow the march towards more globalized science.

Brendan Maher & Richard Van Noorden







Nature Special, June 2021

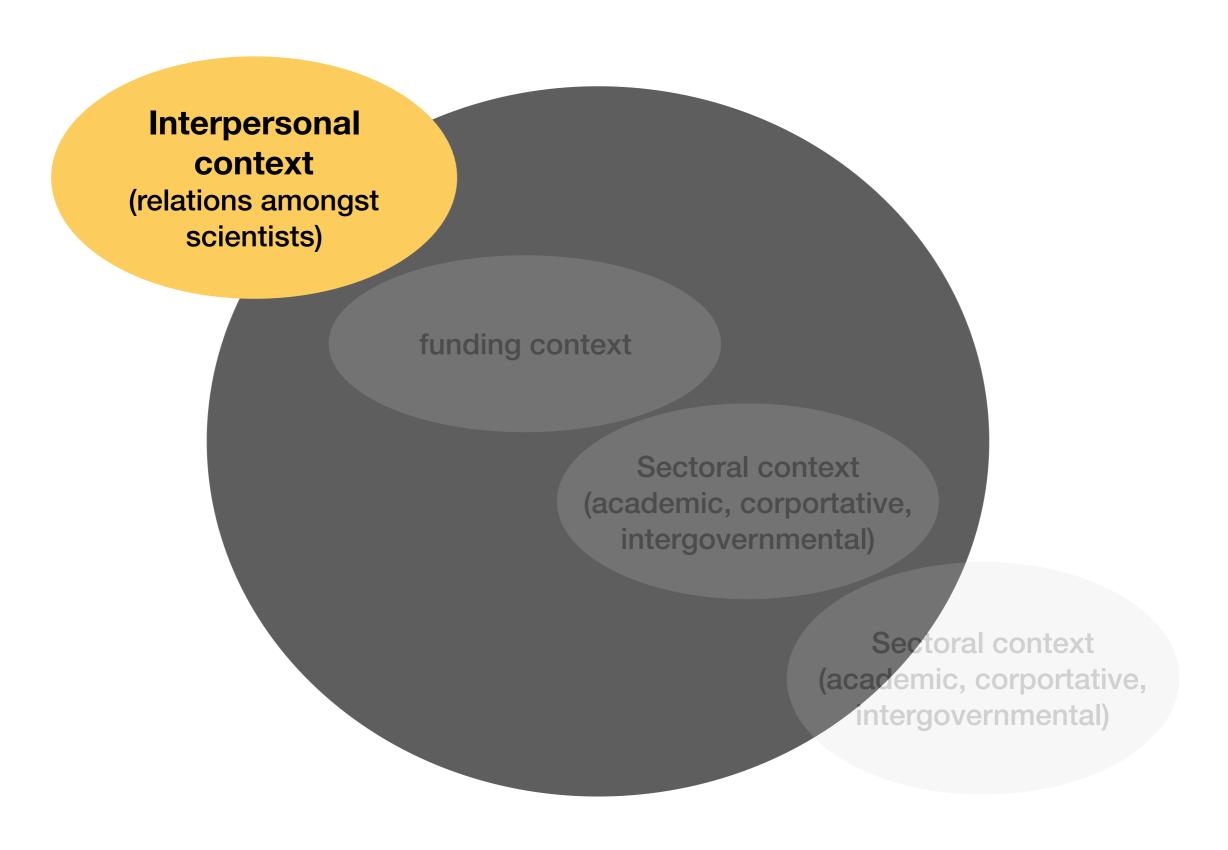
#### Part II

#### **Evolution of collabrative science work:**

## principles & applications



#### **Collaboration factors**



2. Elements

#### 2.1 How to create, foster and sustain your collaboration?



Don't start with poor approach: You need to explain what you bring to collaboration besides enthusiasm



Don't assume your chosen partner will make a good collaborator just because their work complements yours!

2. Elements 35

#### 2.1 How to create, foster and sustain your collaboration?

Resarch collaboration team



#### Level of integration / interaction





#### PI initiated:

PI mainly works on his own

#### **Collaboration:**

Group complementary work

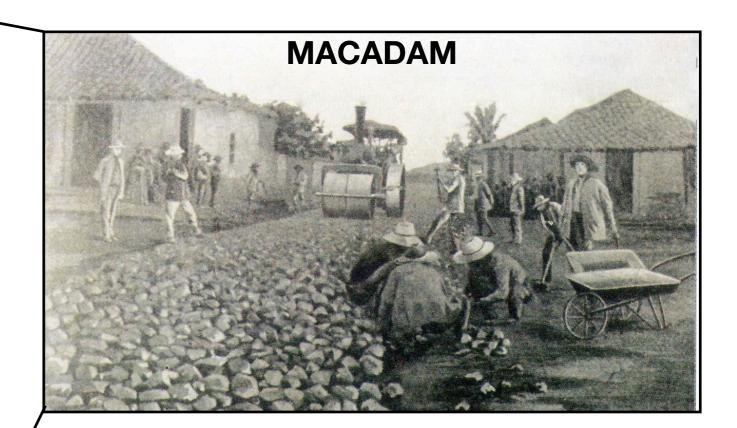
#### **Integrated team:**

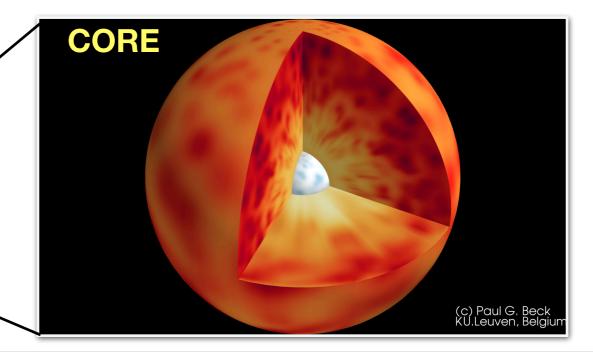
 Separate expertise parts are fully integrated

2. Elements 36

#### MACADAM / CORE framework

- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation
- COmmunication
- RElationaship





# Essential elements of international collaboration

- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation

- Mutually determine project questions
  & goals
- Define the way of sharing rewards and benefits

# Essential elements of international collaboration

- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation

- "This collaboration is important, and every collaboration can be learned!"
- "Great to work with experts in the complementary fields!"
- "This is a task that can only be achieved with teamwork!"



• Suppress big "I" (a.k.a. "big ego") in collaboration!

# Essential elements of international collaboration

- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation

• What is our goal:

Paper?

(timescale: months/years)

Observational proposal?

(timescale: weeks/days!!!)

Funding proposal?

(timescale: weeks/months)

# Essential elements of international collaboration

• Menagement plan/Structure

• Attitude	Q1	Qualitative: Refine big questions in the field
•Content	<b>Q2</b>	Quantitative: Access or collect the data
• Action	QZ	Quantitative. Access of collect the data
• Dynamics	Q3	Quantitative: Analyse the data
<ul> <li>Accountability</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Mobilisation</li> </ul>	<b>Q4</b>	Qualitative: Answers / future prospects

# Essential elements of international collaboration

- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation

- Taking the outcome of the collaboration and putting it into action.
- "Collaboration without an action is merely a conversation." (D. Wendland)

# Essential elements of international collaboration

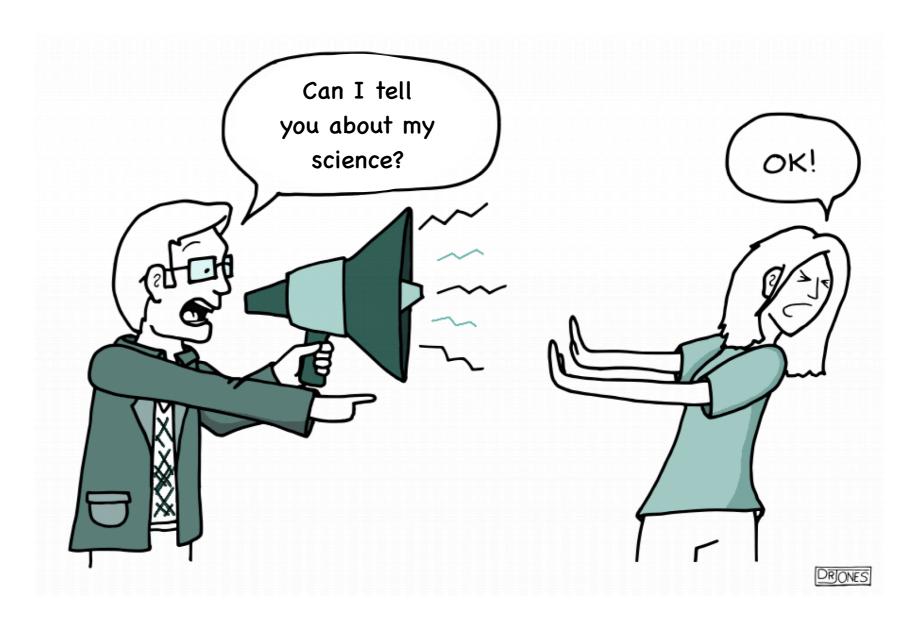
- Menagement plan/Structure
- Attitude
- Content
- Action
- Dynamics
- Accountability
- Mobilisation

- Research teams form and develop through four critical stages to achieve peak performance.
- When individuals from diverse backgrounds come together on teams, their roles and interactions must evolve over time in order to become highly functional groups.

**Crucial for cross-cultural collaborations!** 

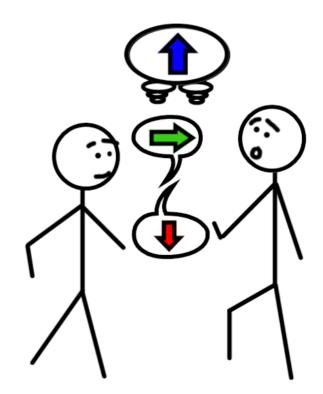
#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication
  - +Assertiveness
- Relationship



#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication
  - +Assertiveness
- Relationship



Effective communication creates mutual understanding!



#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication
  - +Assertiveness
- Relationship

Communicate your project results
 & future prospects

(e.g., How did we arrive to our findings? Why this research is important?)

Future prospects, potential for funding proposals etc.

#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication
  - +Assertiveness
- Relationship

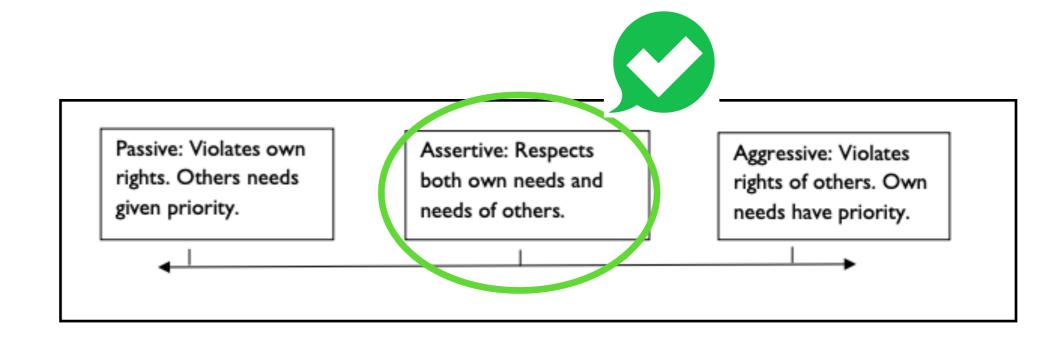


Common problem is personal/culture's inflexibility and low tolerance for ambiguity in messaging, which leads to miscommunication!

#### COmmunication & RElationship • It is not only communication what

- Communication
  - +Assertiveness
- Relationship

- It is not only communication what matters, but communication style!
- Collaborators should express their views and ideas without violating the rights of others.



#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication + Assertiveness
- Relationship

- Are we OK together?
- Can we trust to each other?
- Is everyone comfortable with role?

. . . .

Do we all see the same goal???

. . .

How our relationship evolves?
 Is it strengthening with time?



**Building strong relations requires time & trust** 

#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication + Assertiveness
- Relationship

- Are we OK together?
- Can we trust to each other?
- Is everyone comfortable with role?

....

Do we all see the same goal???

. . .

How our relationship evolves?
 Is it strengthening with time?



Don't be afraid of feedbacks!

#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication + Assertiveness
- Relationship

- Are we OK together?
- Can we trust to each other?
- Is everyone comfortable with role?

....

Do we all see the same goal???

. . .

How our relationship evolves?
 Is it strengthening with time?



Don't be afraid of admiting mistakes!

#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication + Assertiveness
- Relationship

Strengthen the relationship...
...independently of tasks!

#### COmmunication & RElationship

- Communication + Assertiveness
- Relationship

Strengthen the relationship... ...independently of tasks!



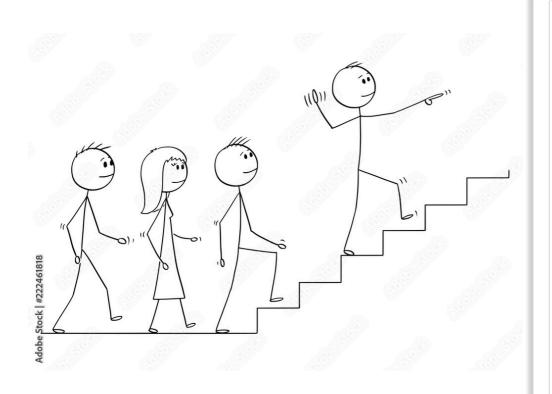
Strong relationships are key in international collaborations!



### "Collaboration is about having fun!" (M.Rilling, UCWB)

• Pick the people you like, not only those with skills!

#### As a leader:



- Diversity of people / complementary skills
   & characters
- Be clear of expectations & deadlines (don't by tyran! :))
- Exploit useful tools for collaborations (Overleaf, Slack, Google Docs, Asana)
- Strengthen relationships

### 2.3 Summary of Part II How to create, foster and sustain your collaboration?

### "Collaboration is about having fun!" (M.Rilling, UCWB)

• Pick the people you like, not only those with skills!

#### As a contributor:



- Find your feet, and keep the PI informed
- Be on time & be optimistic
- Make the team better (don't underdeliver tasks)
- Focus on numbers, but be human in interaction:)

#### Part III

# Evolution of collabrative science work: from ideas to discoveries

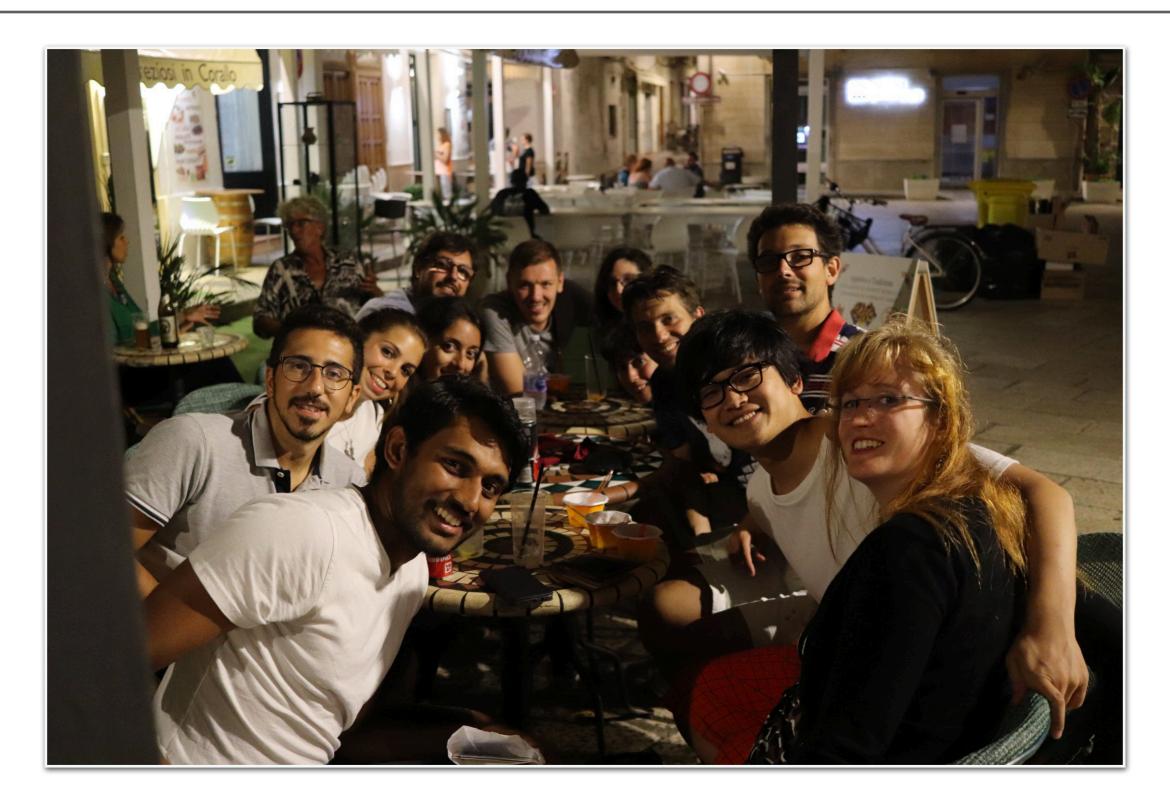


#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries

- It's a common trap that many professional resaerchers work isolated from colleagues!
- Don't stop following the work of others!
  - 1. Respect your competitors...
  - 2. ...and ask them to collaborate (because, why not!)

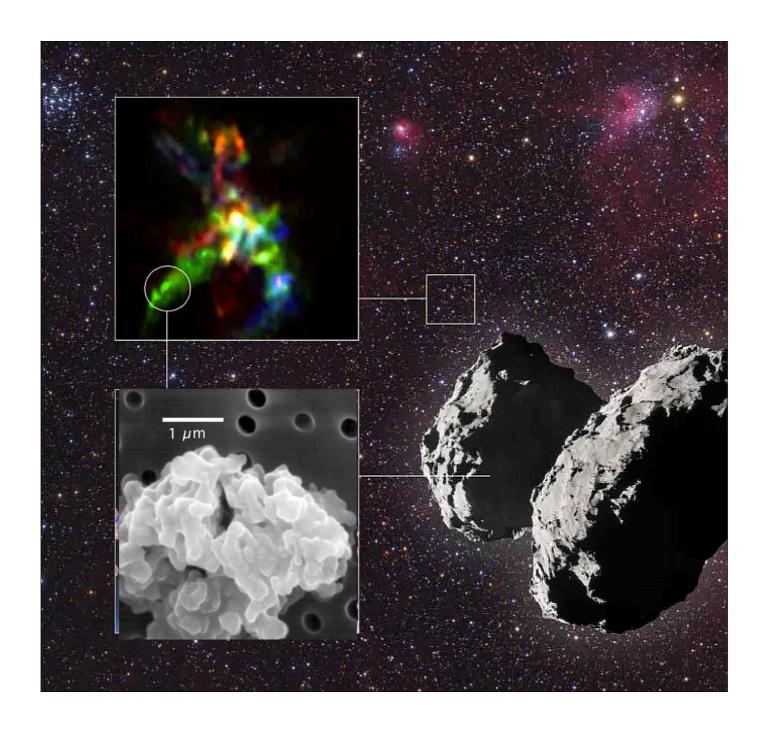


#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: project DUSTY GIANTS



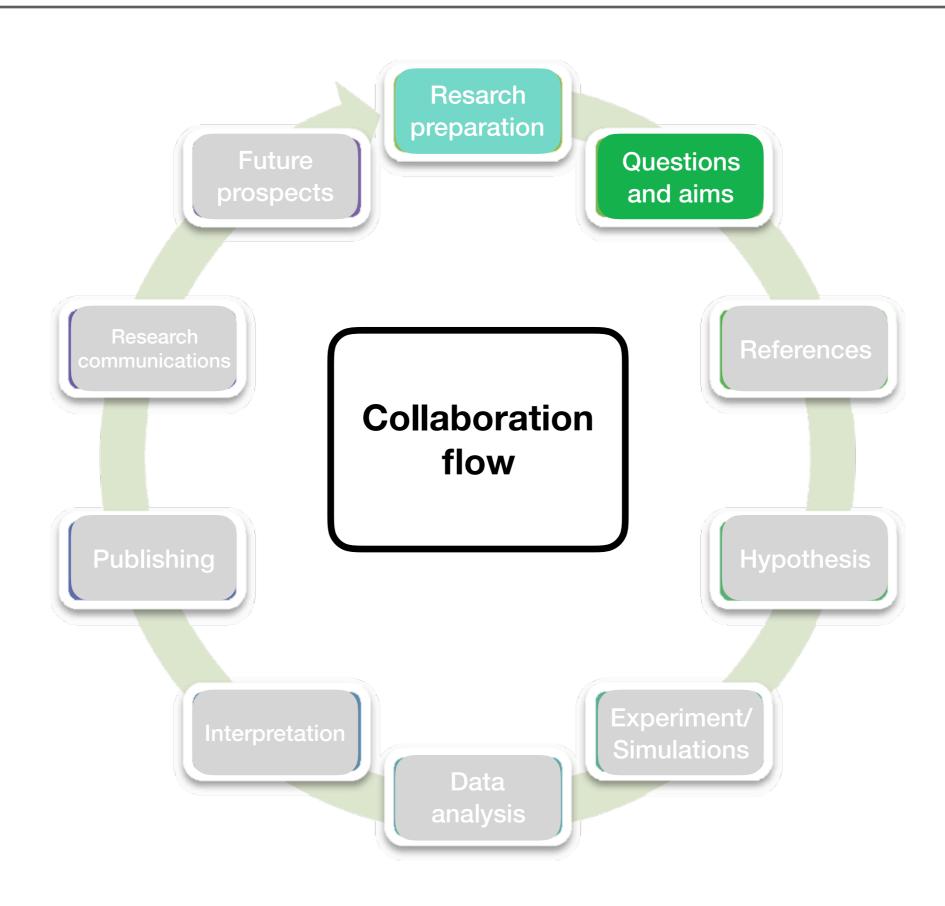
Galaxy evolution conference, Favignana 2018

#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: research goal



• Searching for distant galaxies = search for dust (complex structures) in the early Universe









#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries



• How to make collaboration research inovative... and possible?

• If the topic/problem interesting only to me? :)



- Big picture approach?
- Proper anticipation of the work visibility

#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries

- Focus on one of the most important questions
- Realistic goal (temporal & technical)





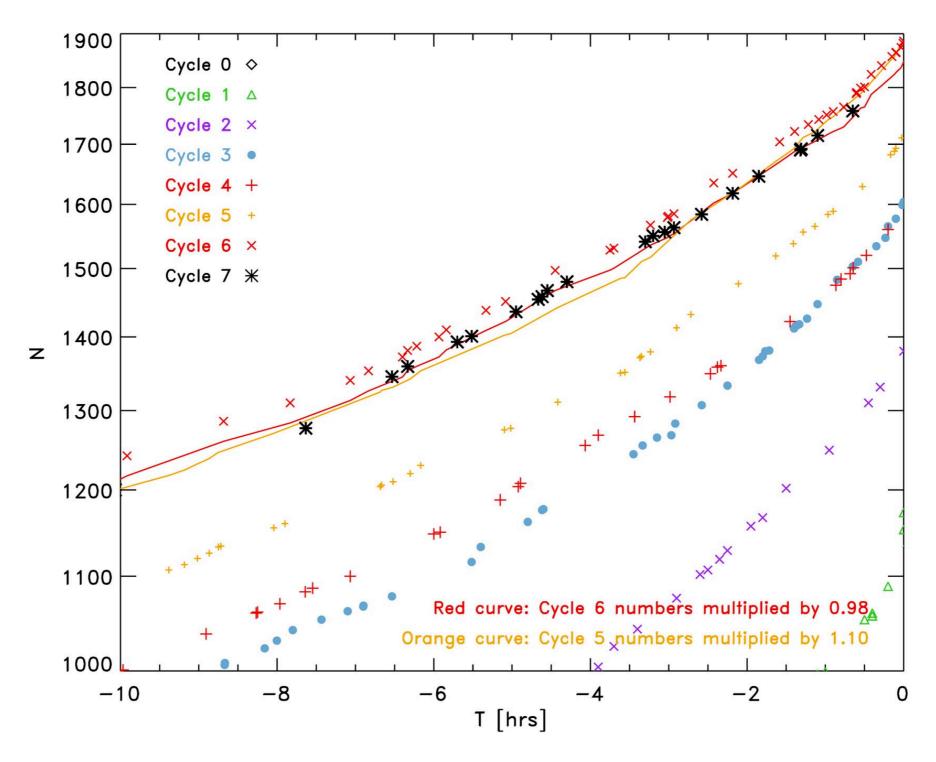
- Don't create a research that is too "straightforward"
- Don't avoid challenge "a-priori"



Don't forget to discuss a risk analysis!

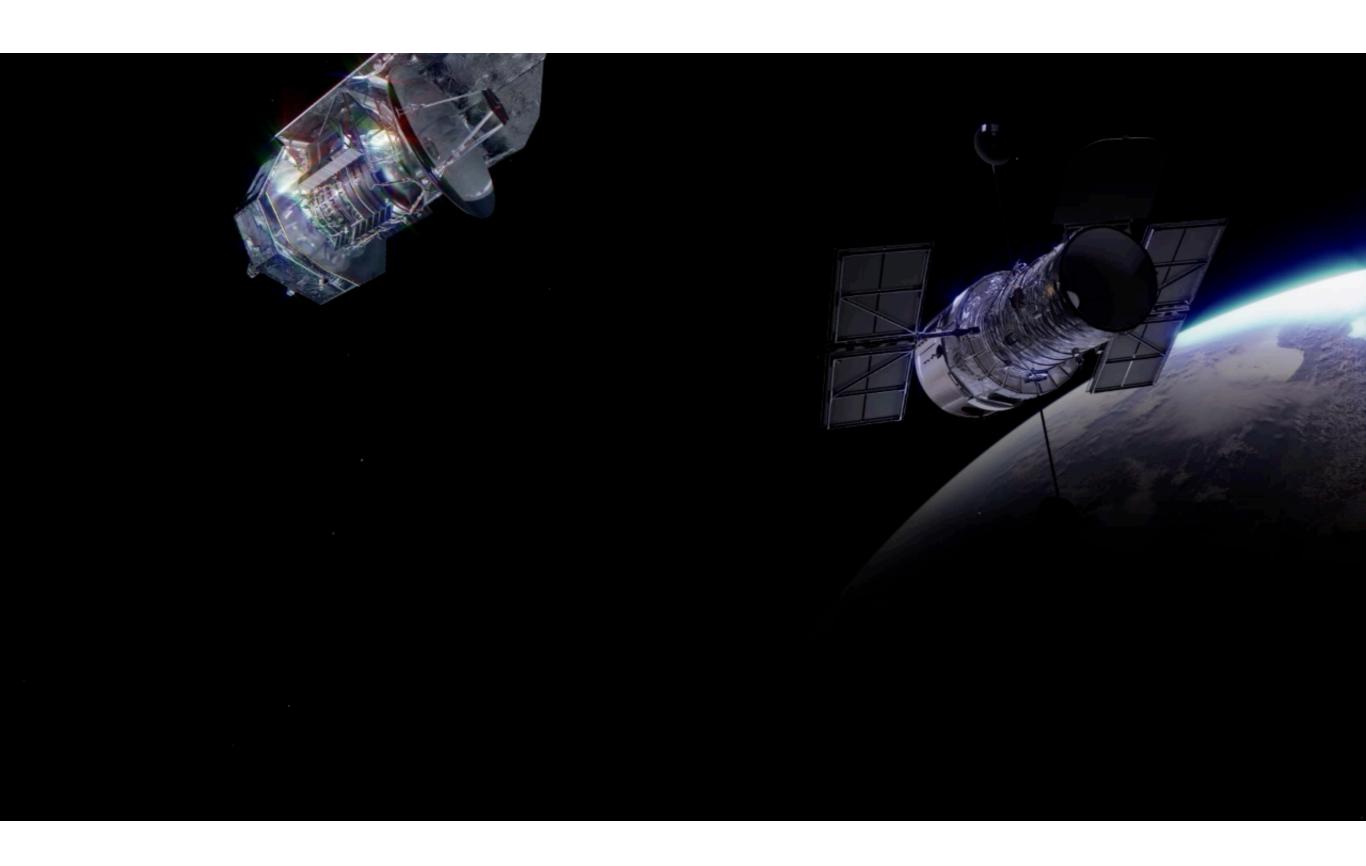
#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: data collection & analysis





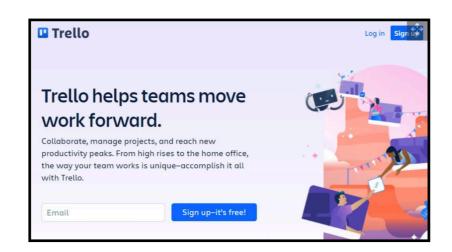
We submitted 7 proposals for different telescopes (4 were succesful)

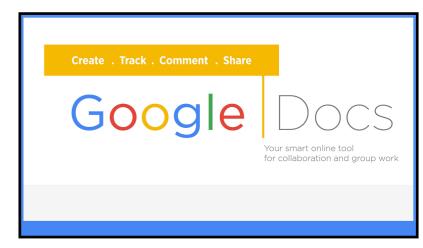
#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: data collection & analysis

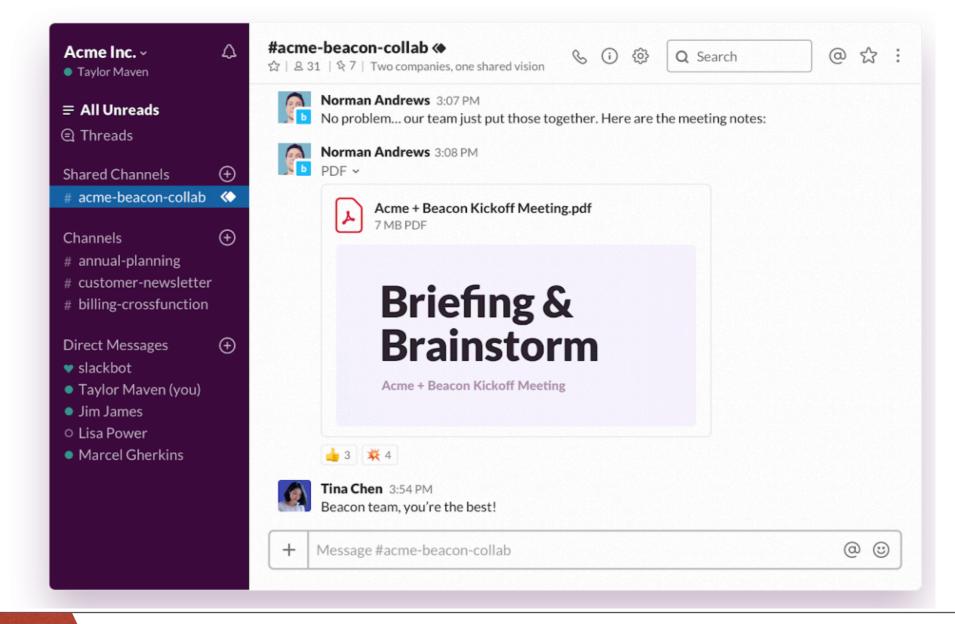


#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: collaborative tools



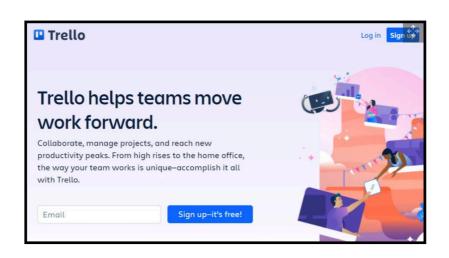


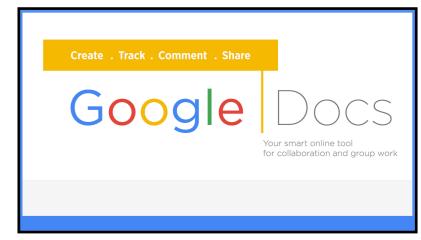


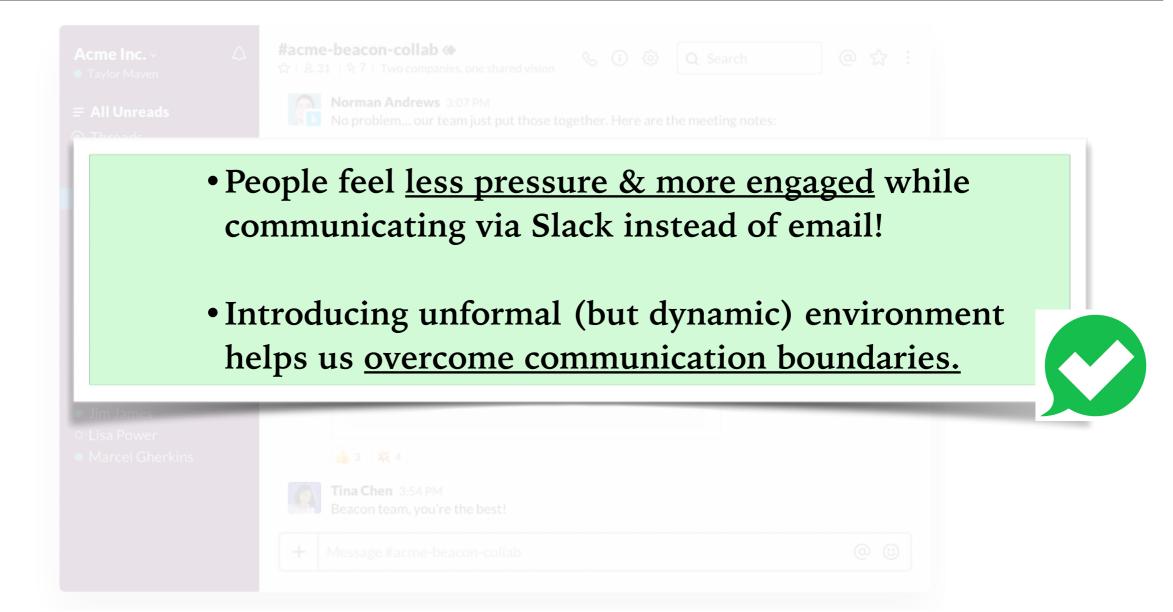


#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: collaborative tools



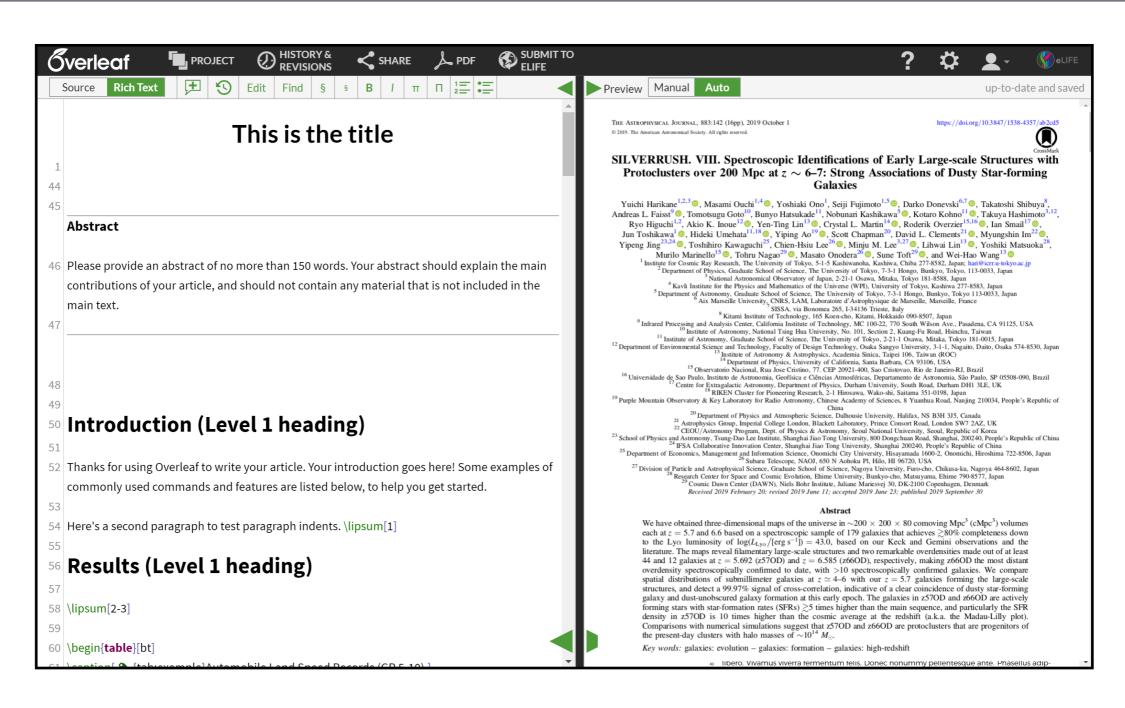






#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: collaborative writing tools





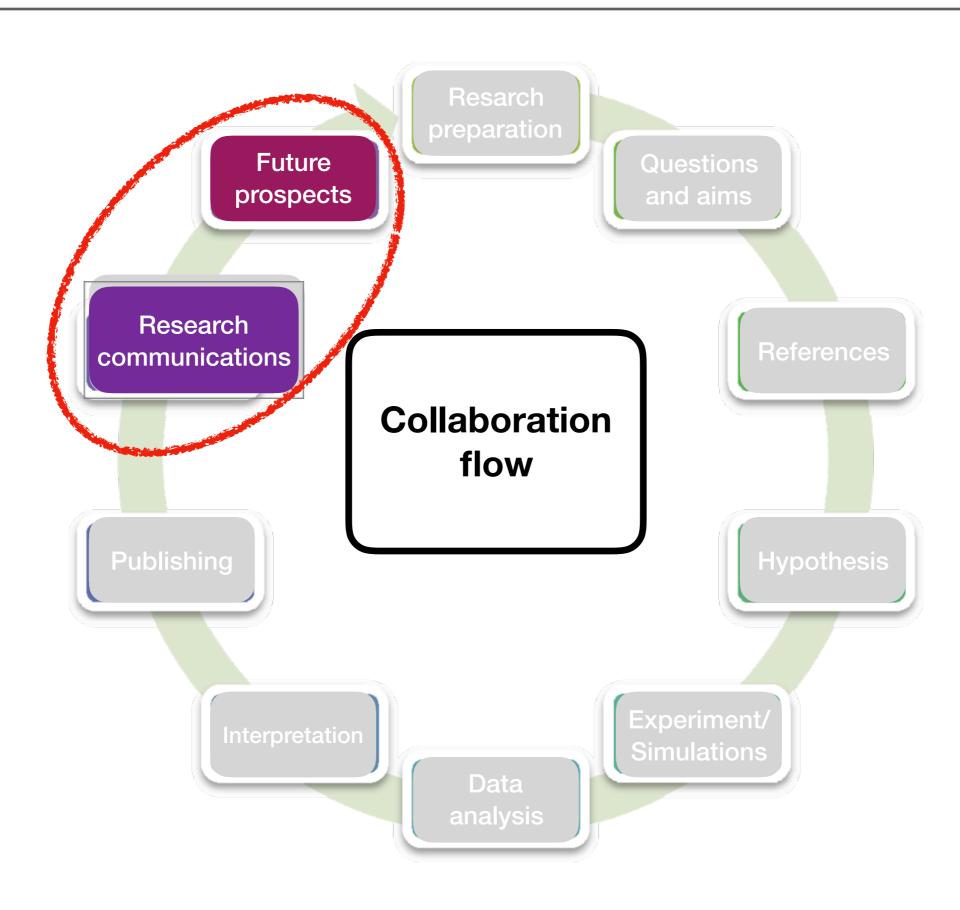
#### 3.1 From ideas to discoveries: outputs



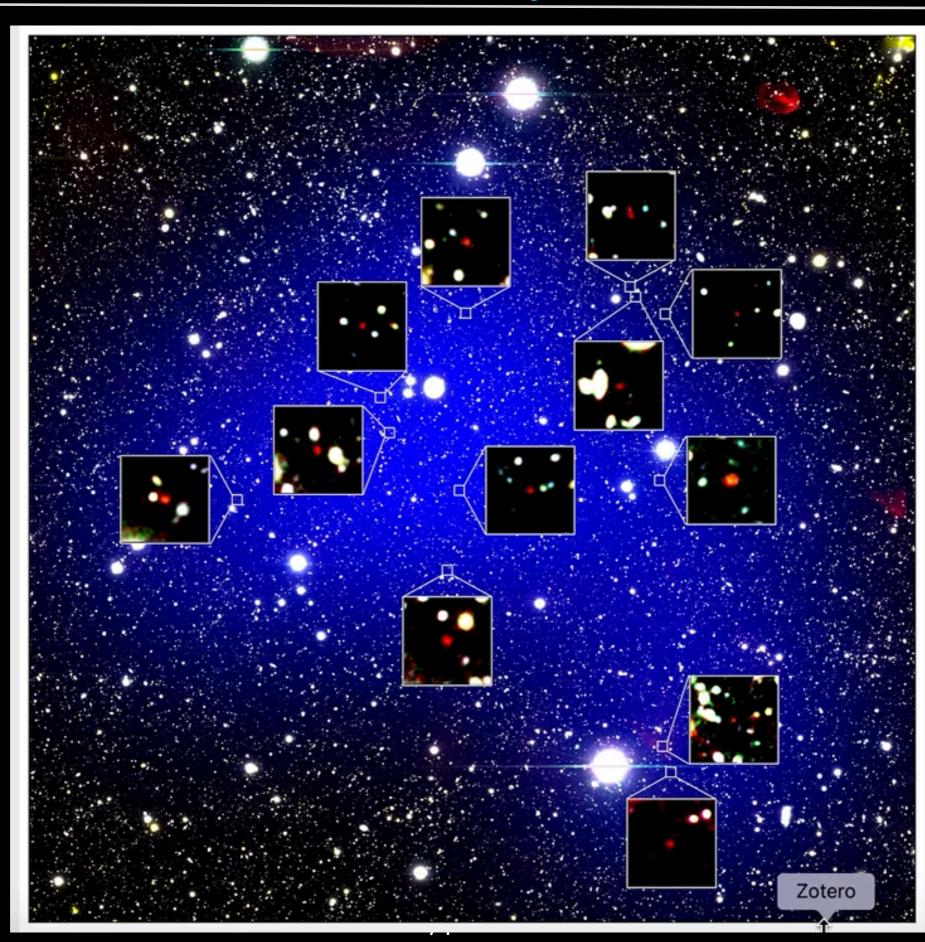


Embrace all types of outputs, not only papers!!!

#### 3.3 Contribute to the open data: teamwork!



## 3.2 Research discovery in a nutshell



#### 3.3 Contribute to the open data: teamwork!

Open platform for science papers

Open database (big data, computing codes etc.)







## 3.4 Communicate your research: teamwork!



International media coverage of our discovery

## 3.4 Communicate your research: teamwork!



Public lecture / CPN Workshop, Belgrade (Serbia)

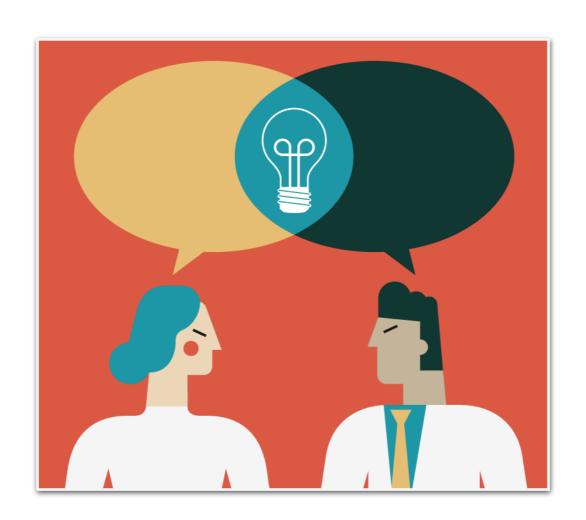
#### 3.5 Exploit the reserach idea to build the team: teamwork!

Early career researchers won individual grants to form & lead their teams!



## Part IV

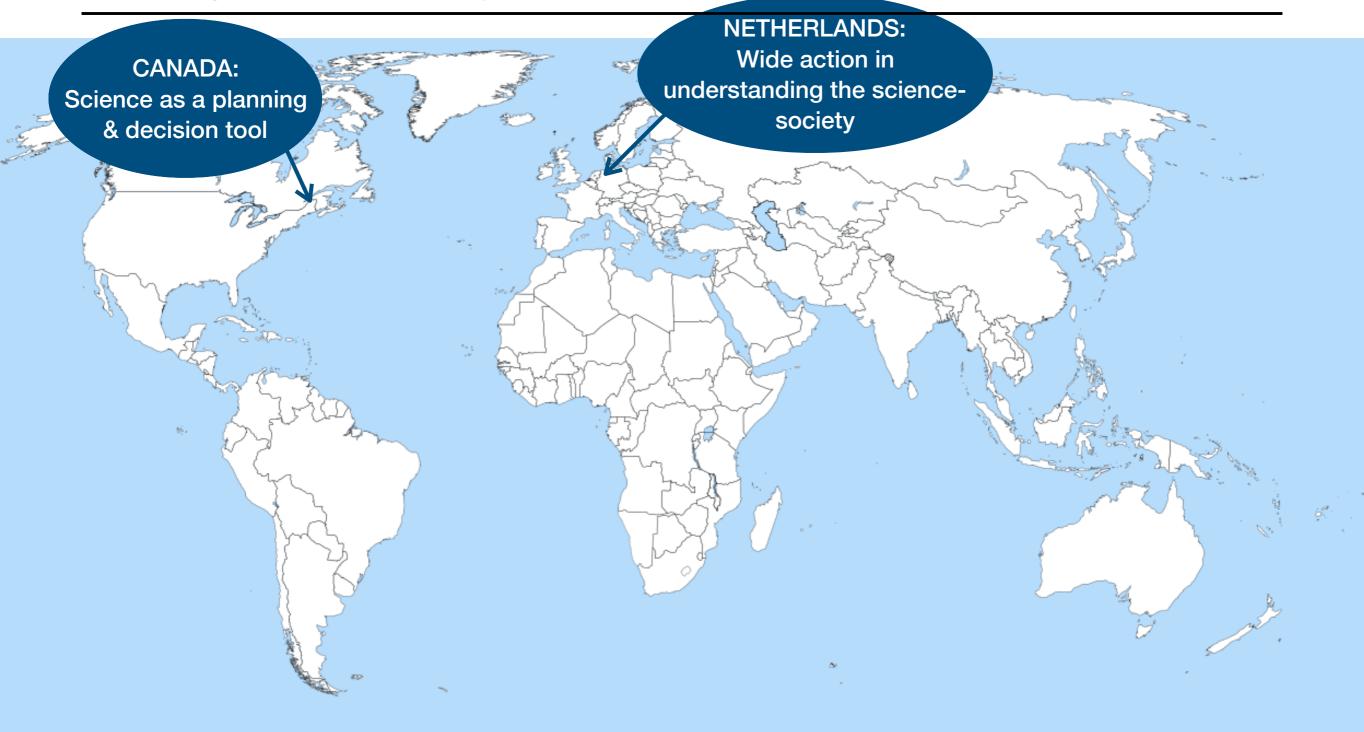
## **Global perspective**



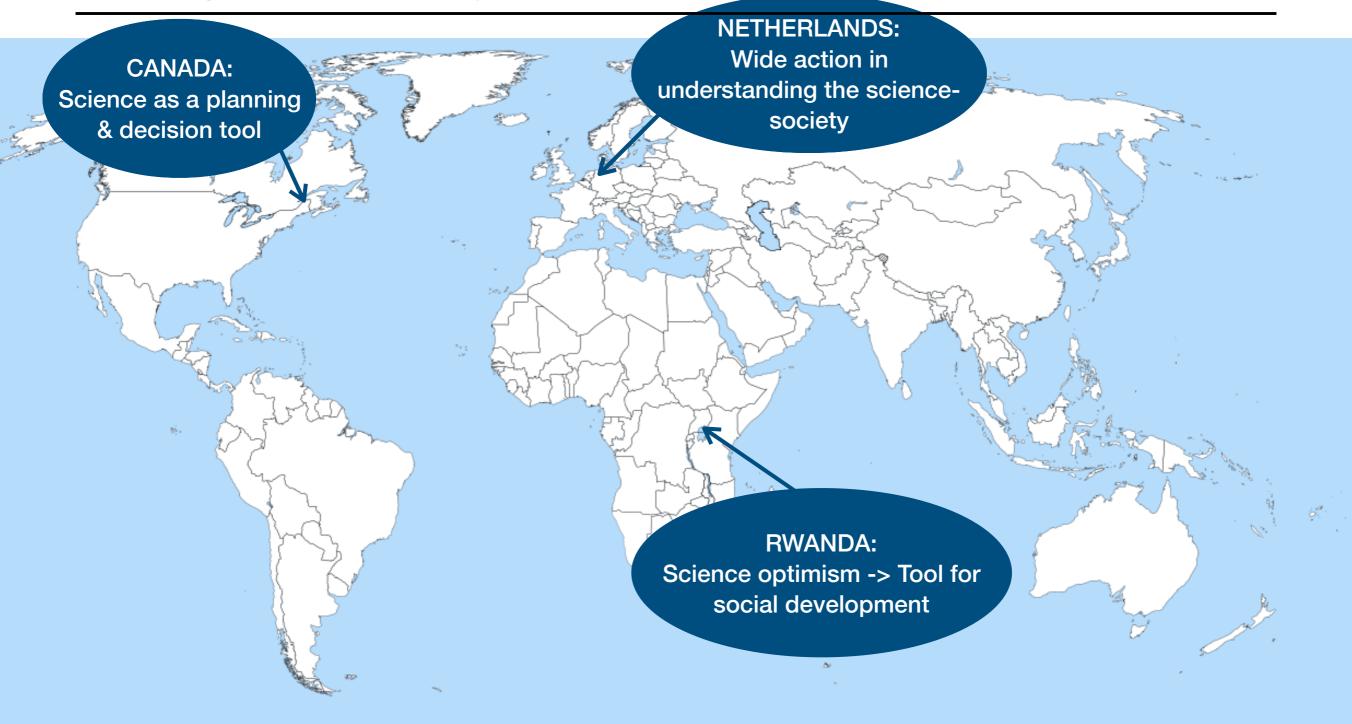
Geographical diversity of main aims and applications



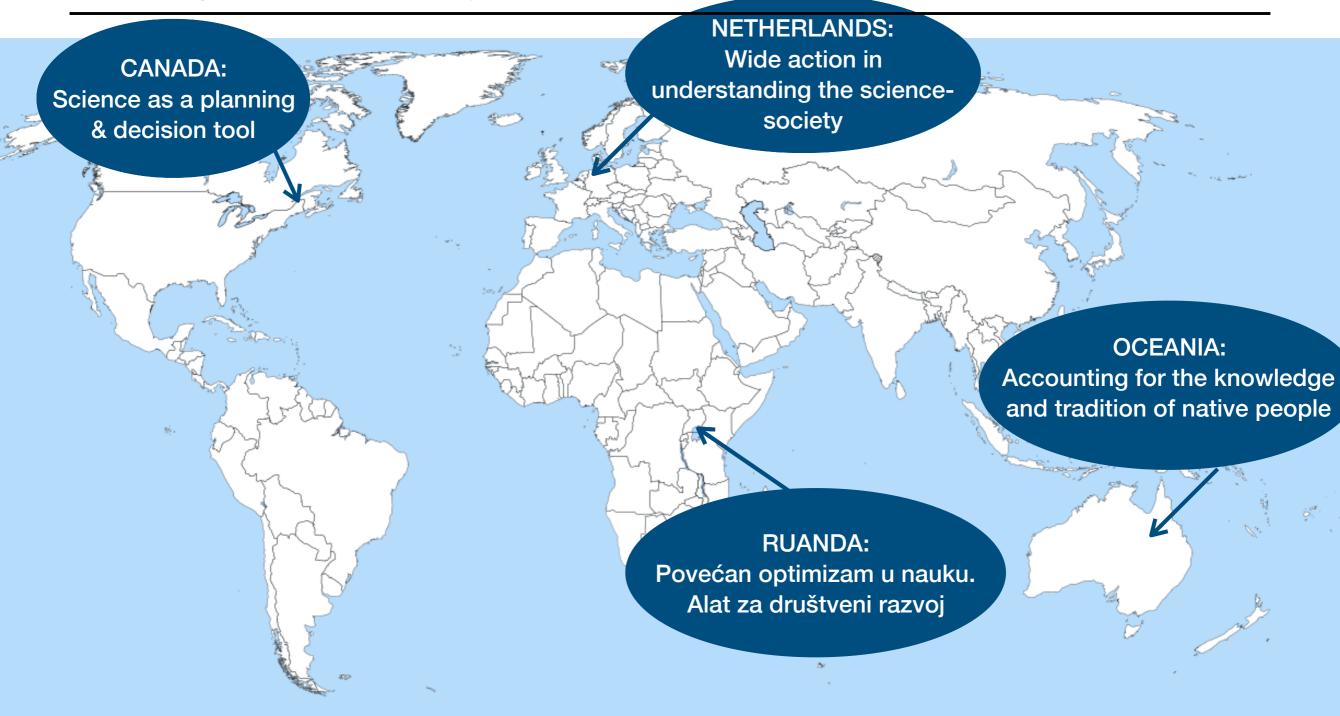
Geographical diversity of main aims and applications



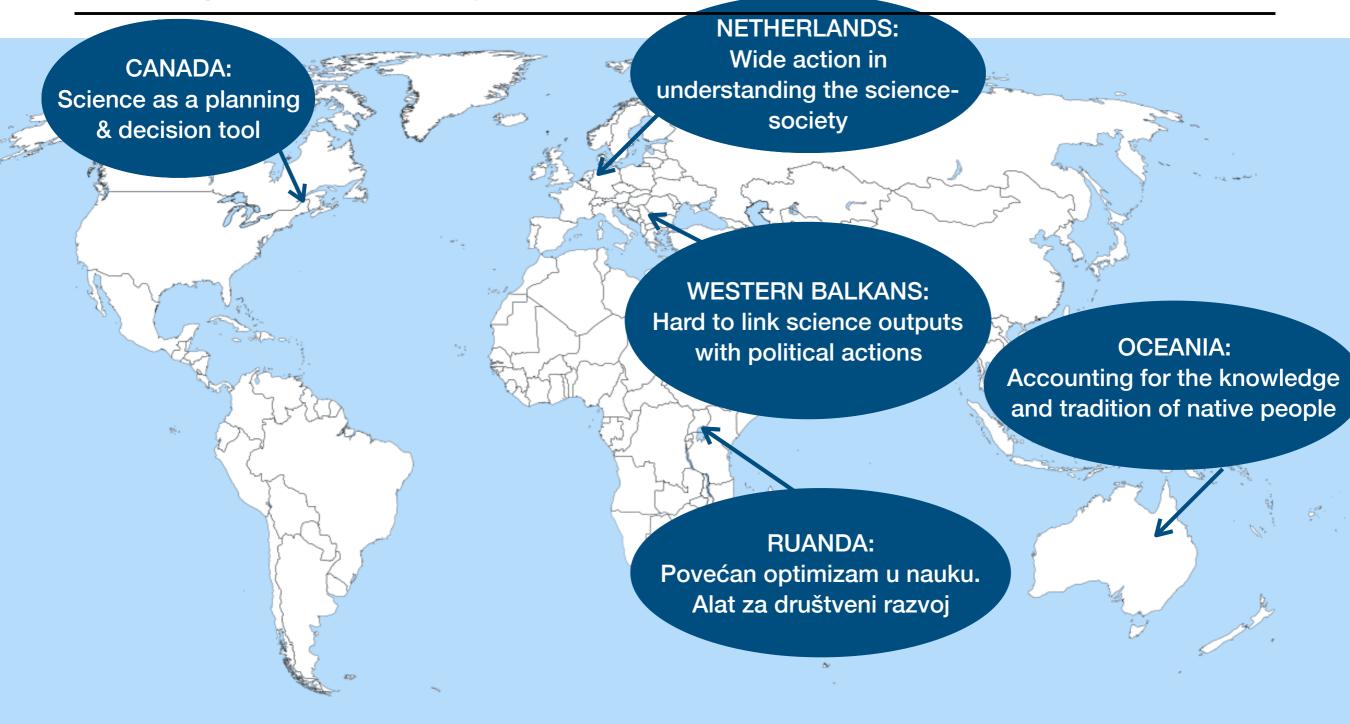
Geographical diversity of main aims and applications



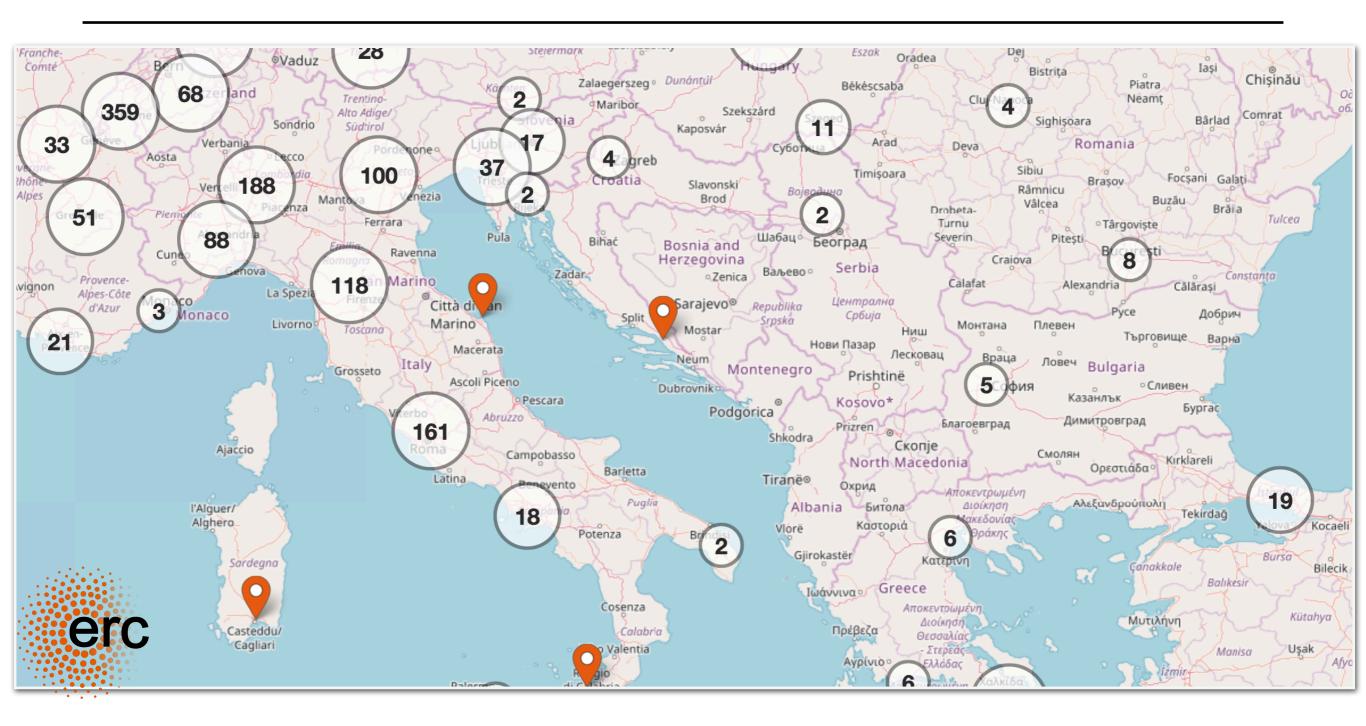
Geographical diversity of main aims and applications



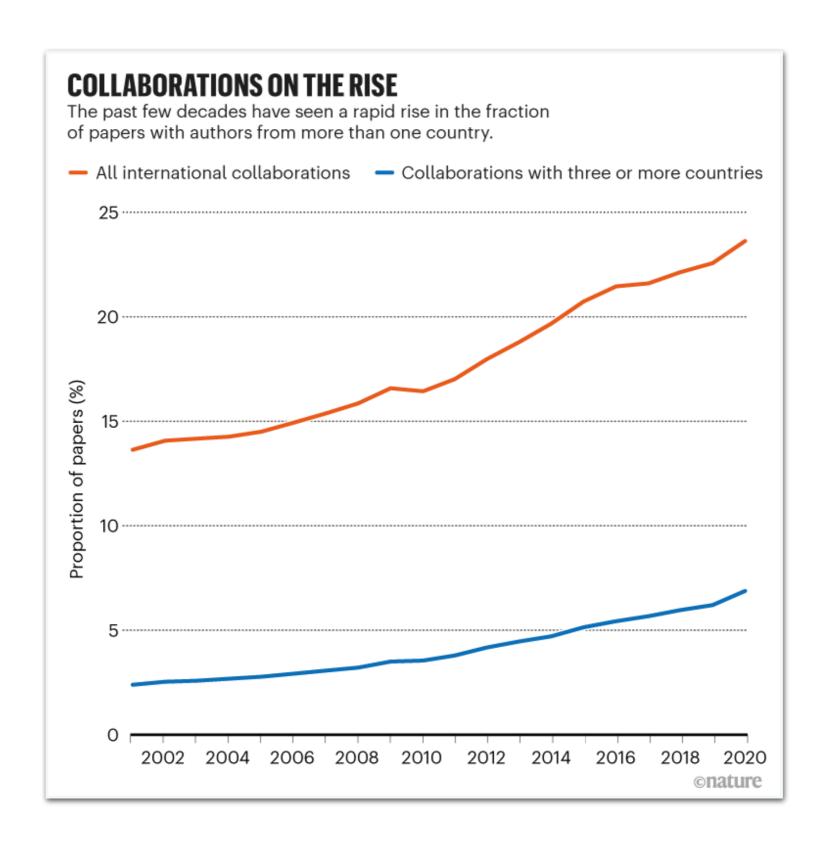
Geographical diversity of main aims and applications



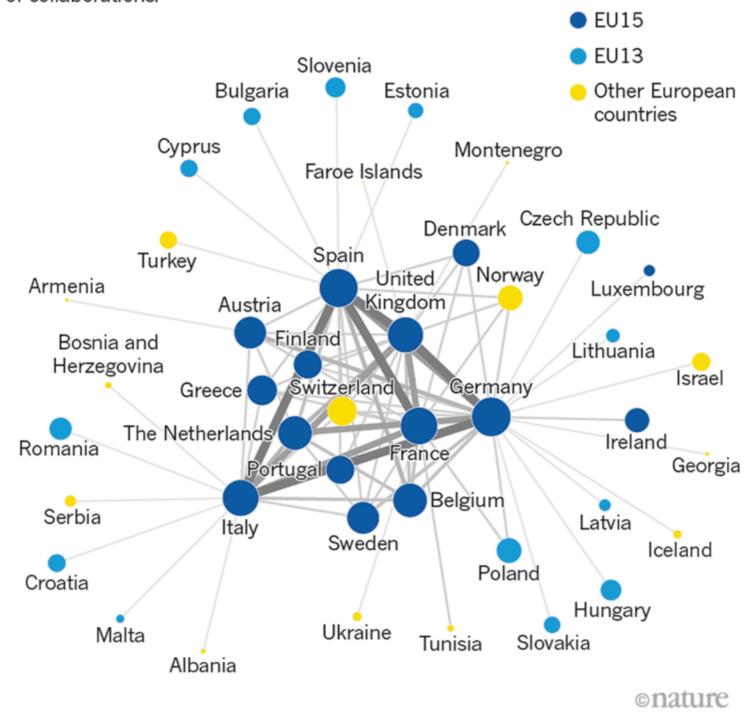
Collaborations reflect and link both local & global importance of science



Number of ERC grants awarded so far credit: ERC



The older EU countries dominate collaborative research projects in Horizon 2020. In this network chart, the size of the node represents how influential a participant is (on the basis of its connections), and the width of the links reflects the number of collaborations.



Source: European Commission: From Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe

#### **Highlights**

Science collaborations have become a must!

Access to (open) science is a human right...

 ...and only collaborations can foster greater understandinig, inspiration, respect trust & knowledge!

#### **Highlights**



Common problem is personal/culture's inflexibility and low tolerance for ambiguity in messaging, which leads to miscommunication!

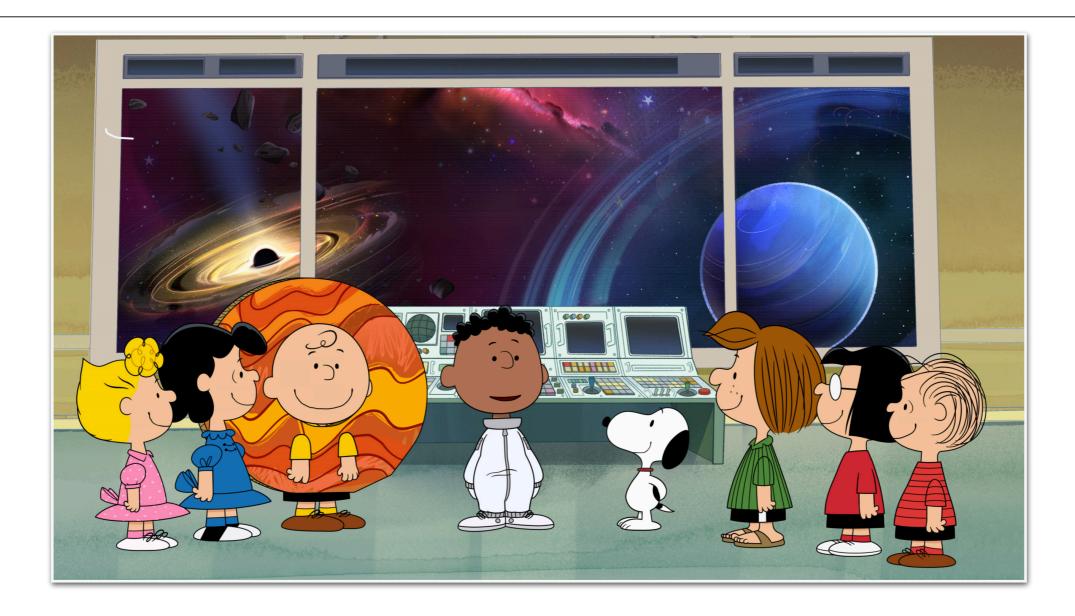






Embrace all types of outputs, not only papers!

#### **Time for discussion**





darko.donevski@ncbj.gov.pl



www.darkodonevski.com



@darkOenergy

#### 2.3 Evolucija: novi teleskopi i kolaboracije na Zemlji



Pre 2000. godine

#### 2.3 Evolucija: novi teleskopi i kolaboracije na Zemlji



Posle 2000. godine

92

#### **ALMA (Attacama Large Milimeter Array)**



2. O otkrićima

## **ALMA (Attacama Large Milimeter Array)**





credit: ESO

## After launch deployment & commissioning

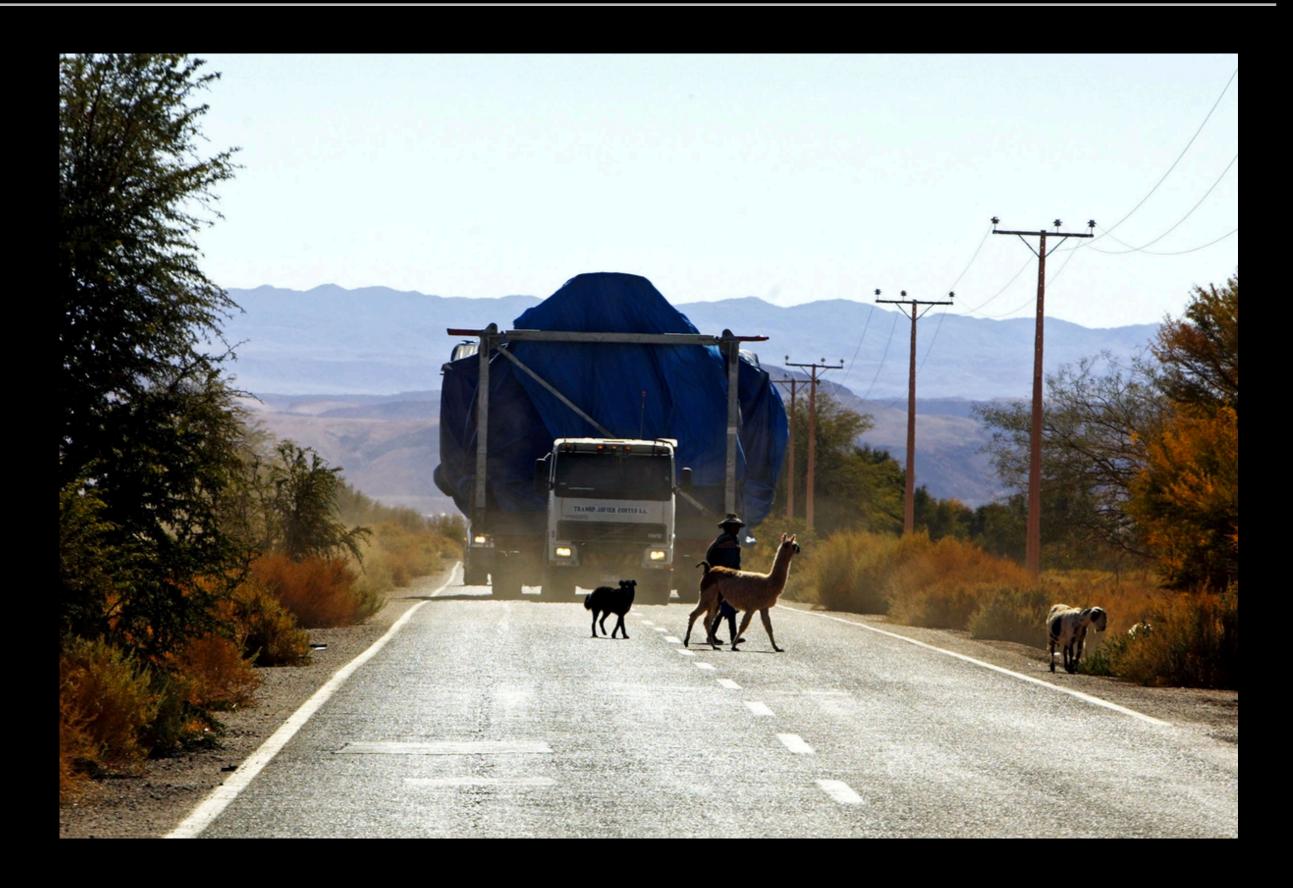


## **ALMA:** mobilnost





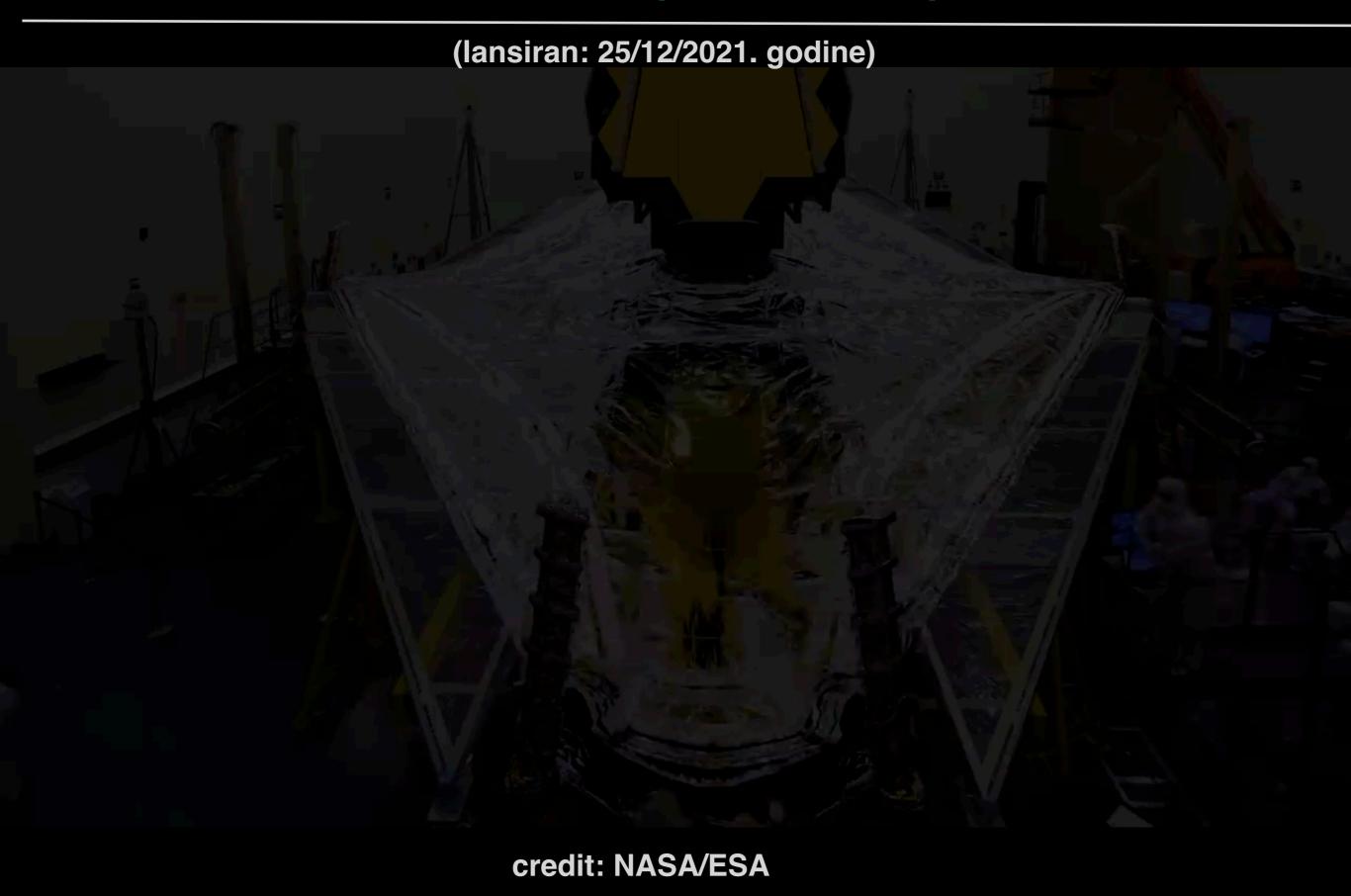




## ALMA: koleboracija



## **James Webb Space Telescope**



# 2.2 Elements of internation collaborations (MACADAM / CORE framework)

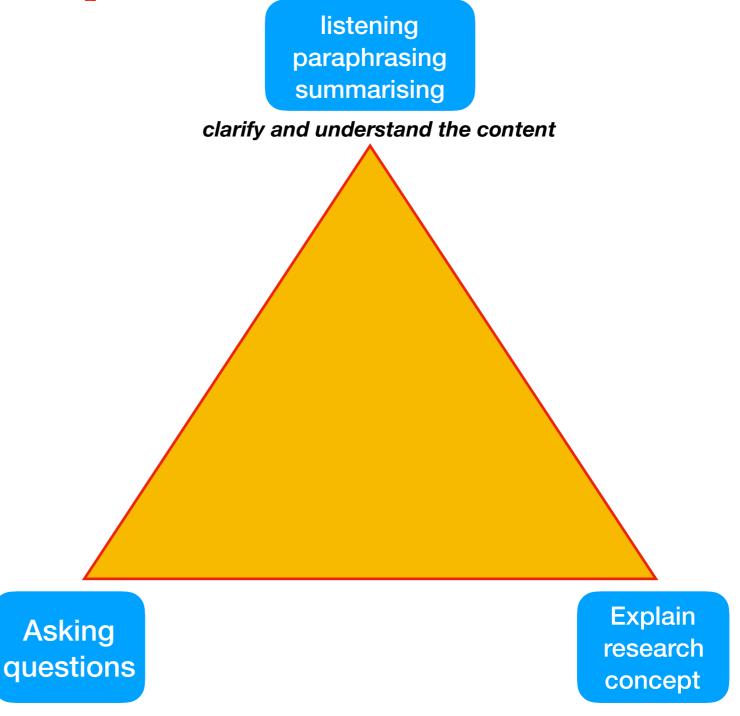
sharing the info needed to make a contribution

## COmmunication & RElationship

Communication

+Assertiveness

Relationship



technical language of our research

credit: E. Vance (Univ. of Colorado Boulder)

2. Elements 103

Grant	Requirements
<b>⇒</b> ERC starting grants	<ul> <li>From 2 to 7 yr after the PhD</li> <li>Maximum 1.5 mil EUR for 5 yr</li> </ul>
<b>⇒</b> ERC consolidator grants	<ul> <li>From 7 to 12 yr after the PhD</li> <li>Maximum 2 mil EUR for 5 yr</li> </ul>
⇒ ERC advanced grants	<ul> <li>Top scientists, previous grant holders</li> <li>Maximum 2.5 mil EUR for 5 god</li> </ul>
<b>⇒</b> ERC proof of concept	<ul> <li>Top scientists, ERC holders, willing to explore commercial potential of their ideas.</li> <li>Max. 150 000 EUR for 5 yr</li> </ul>
⇒ ERC synergy grant	<ul> <li>Top science team of max. 4 people</li> <li>Maximum 10 mil EUR for 5 yr</li> </ul>