A personal view on preparing an H2020 ITN proposal

H2020-MSCA-ITN-2020

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Innovative Training Networks in H2020:

- Under MSCA umbrella, but large cooperative projects.
- Budget ~4m EUR (up to 15 Ph. D. projects).
- Typically involve academia, other research institutions, private sector and more.

WHERE/WHEN/HOW

- How long did it take?
- How early did I start?

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Preparing The Consortium

- Face credibility vs. functionality
- Laying out clear terms

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Working Towards Submission

- Relate to evaluation criteria
- Balance excellence and impact

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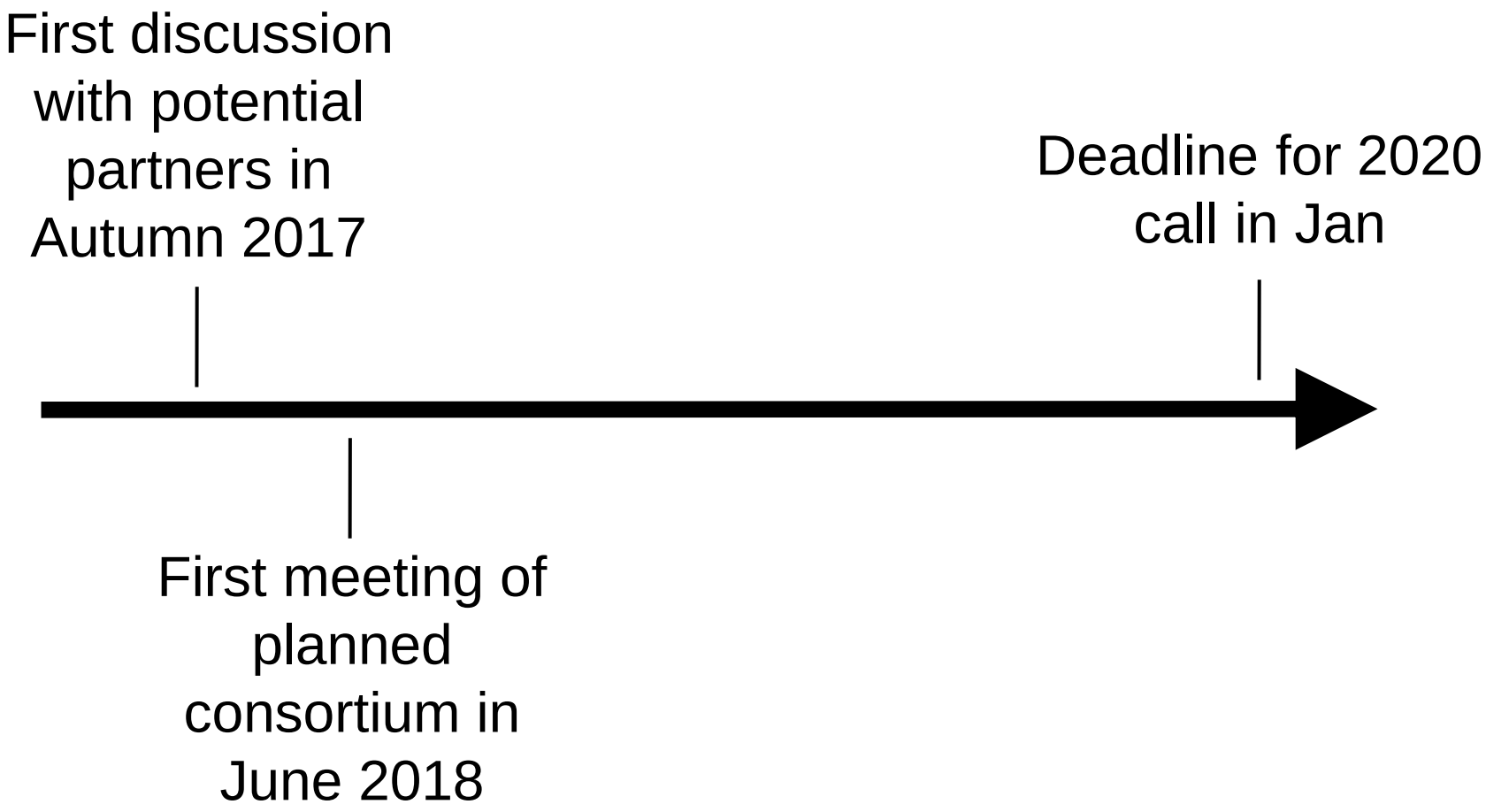

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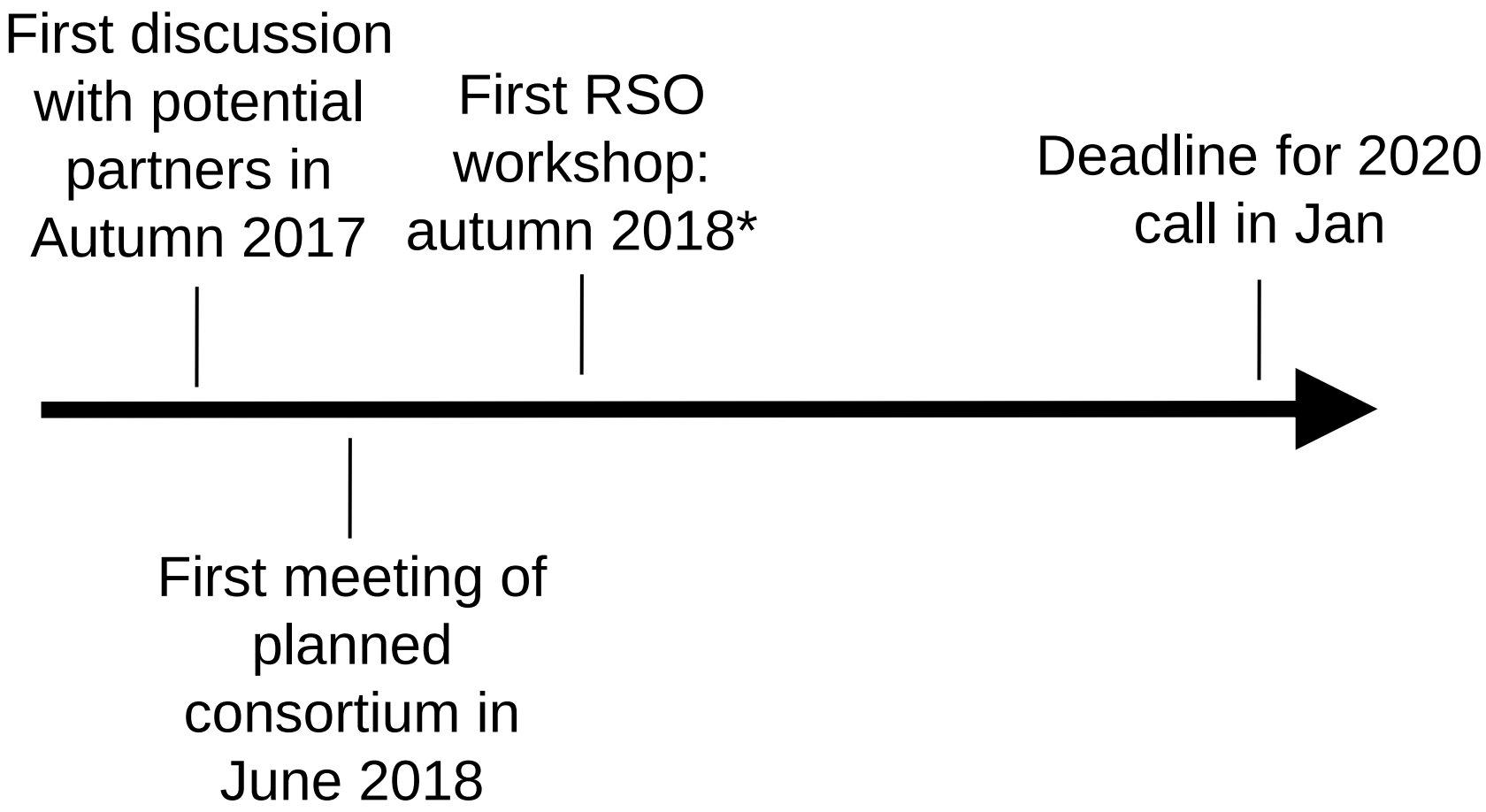

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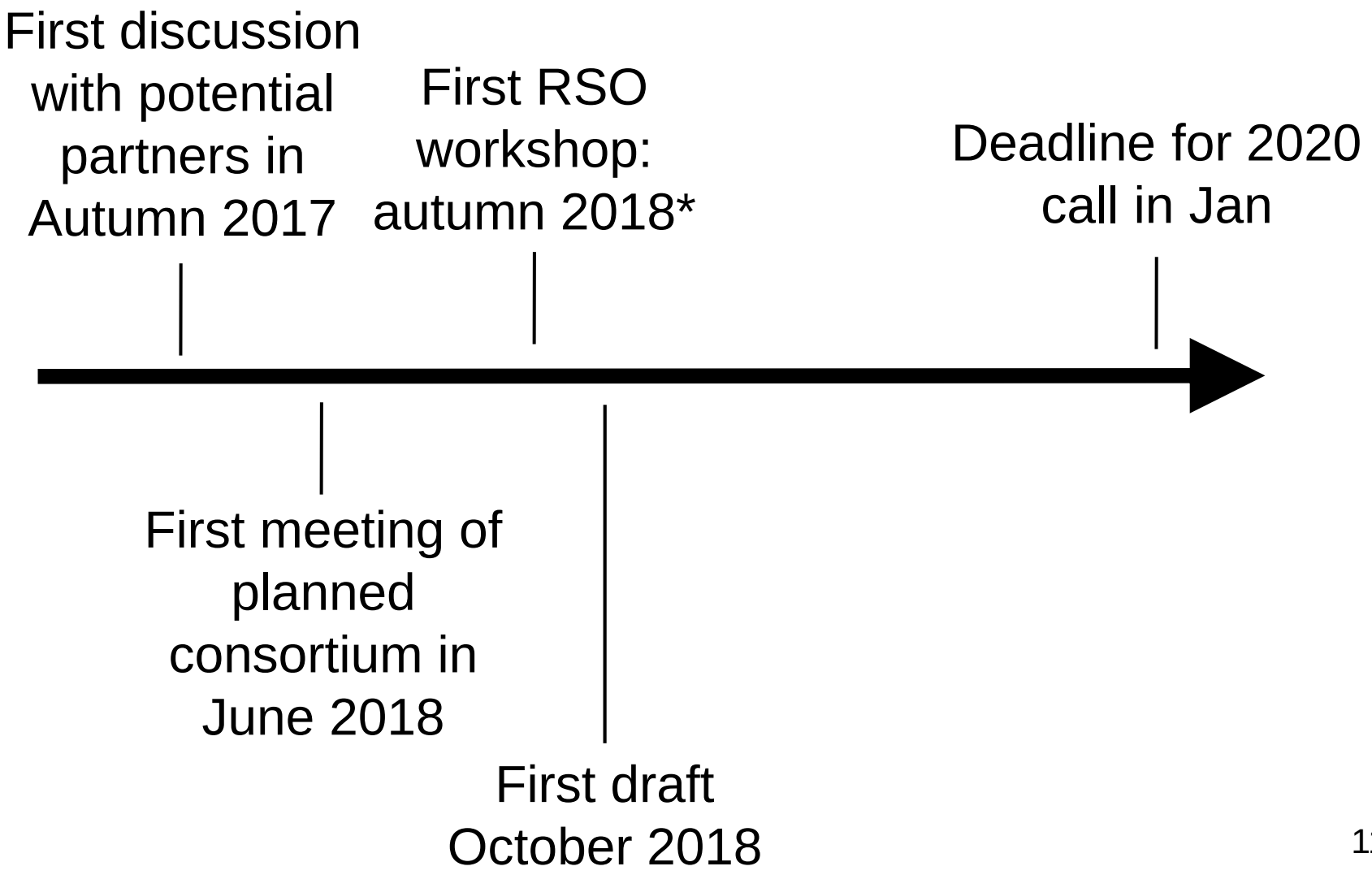

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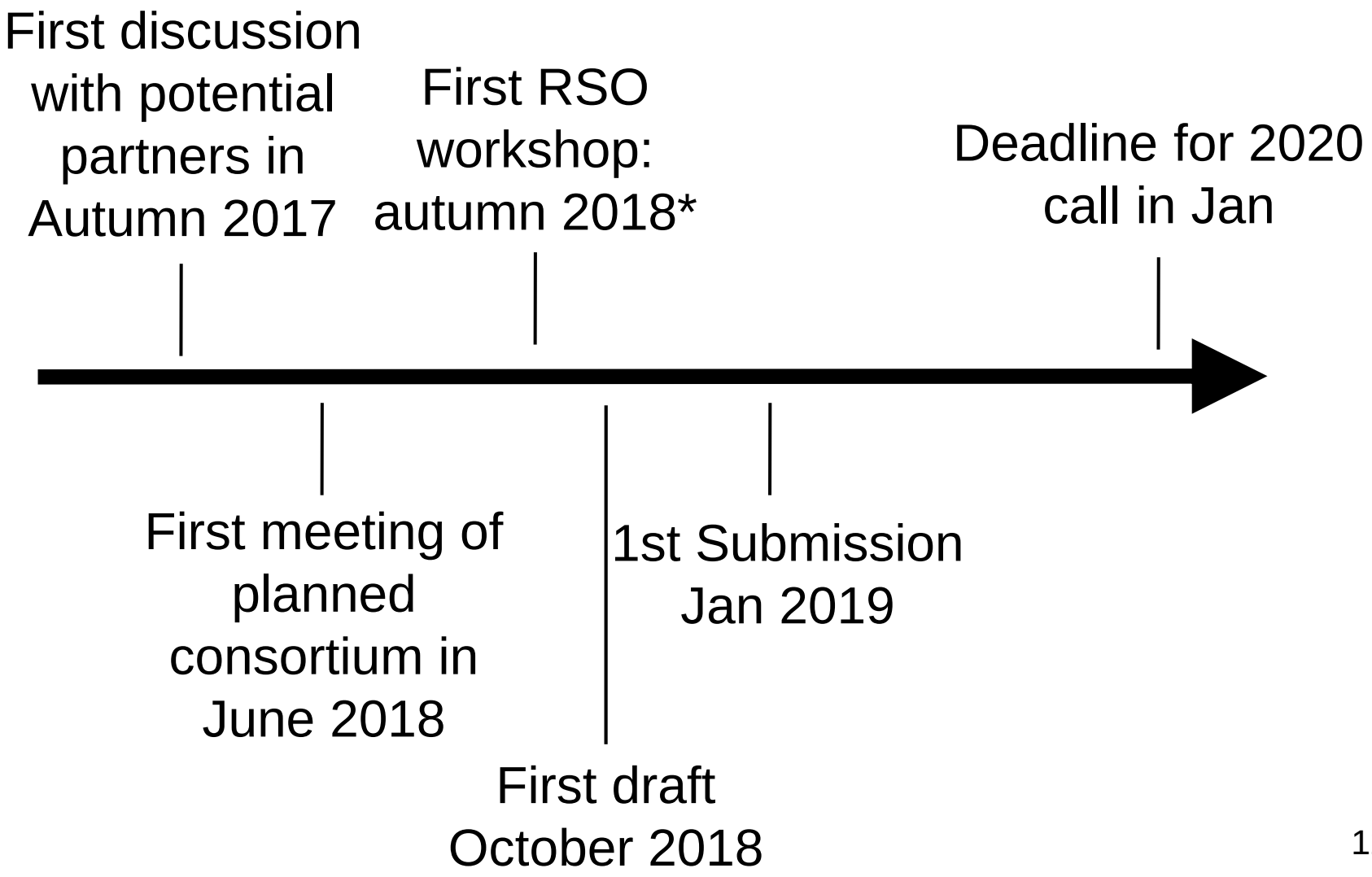

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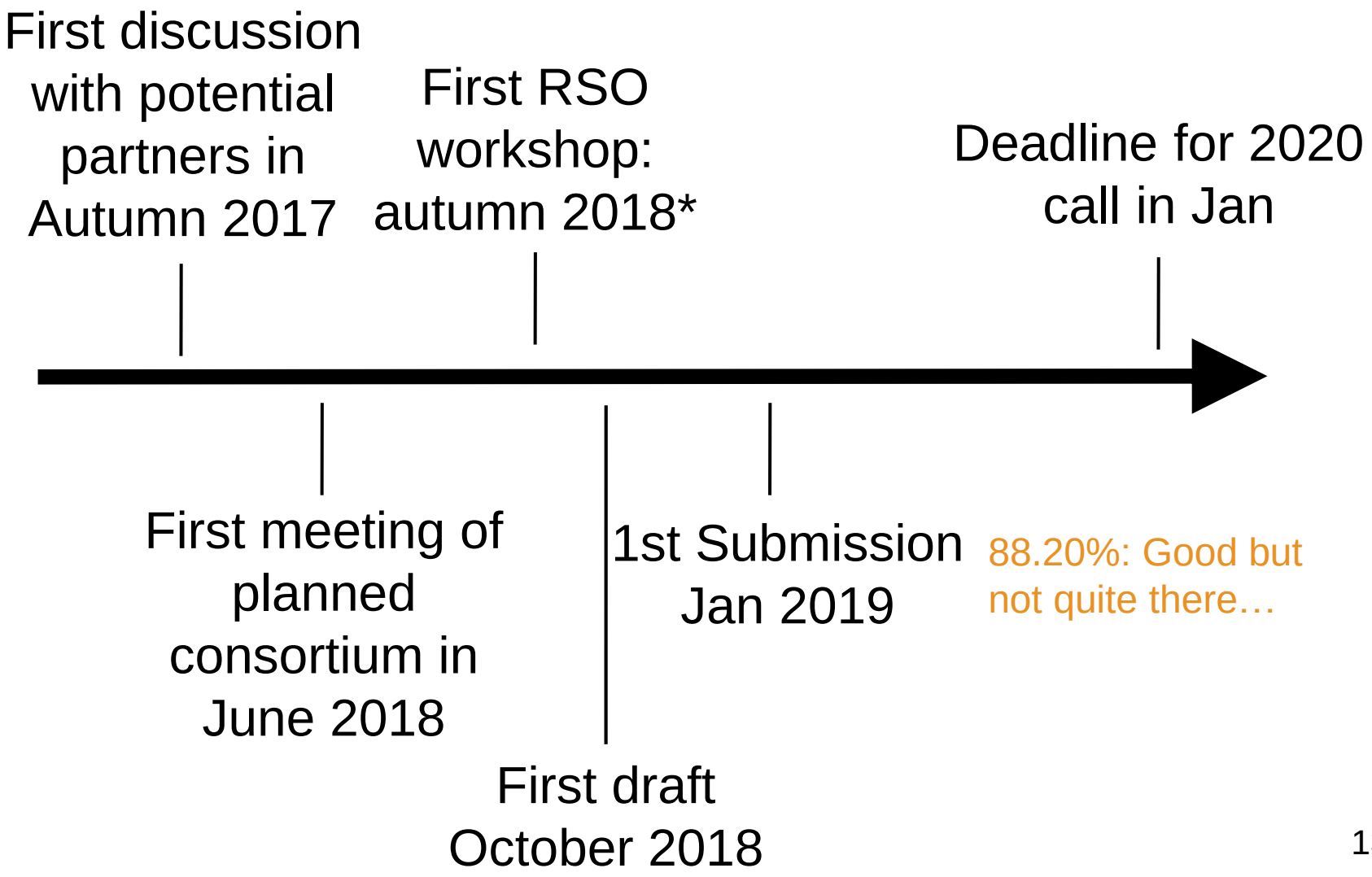

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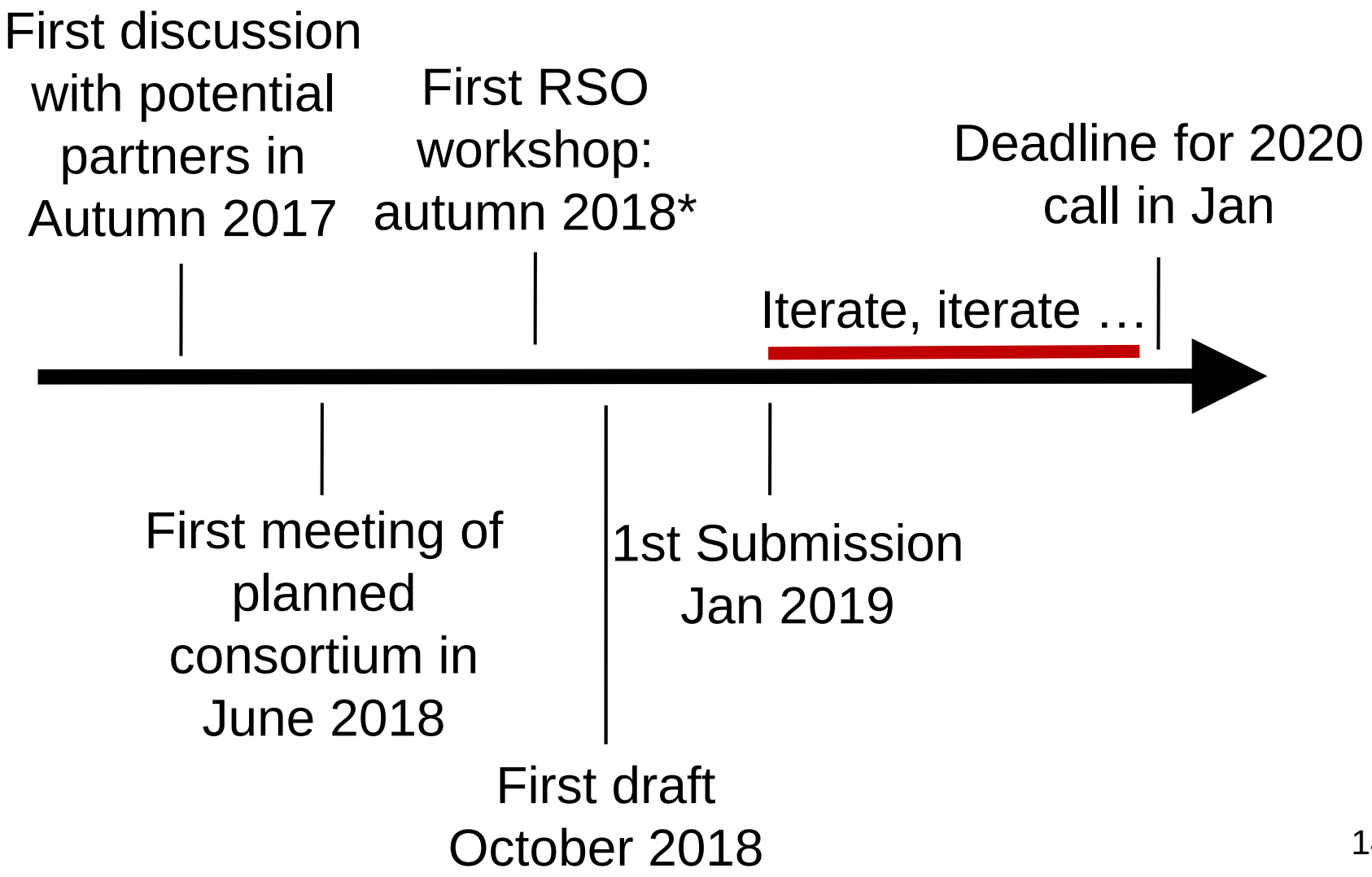

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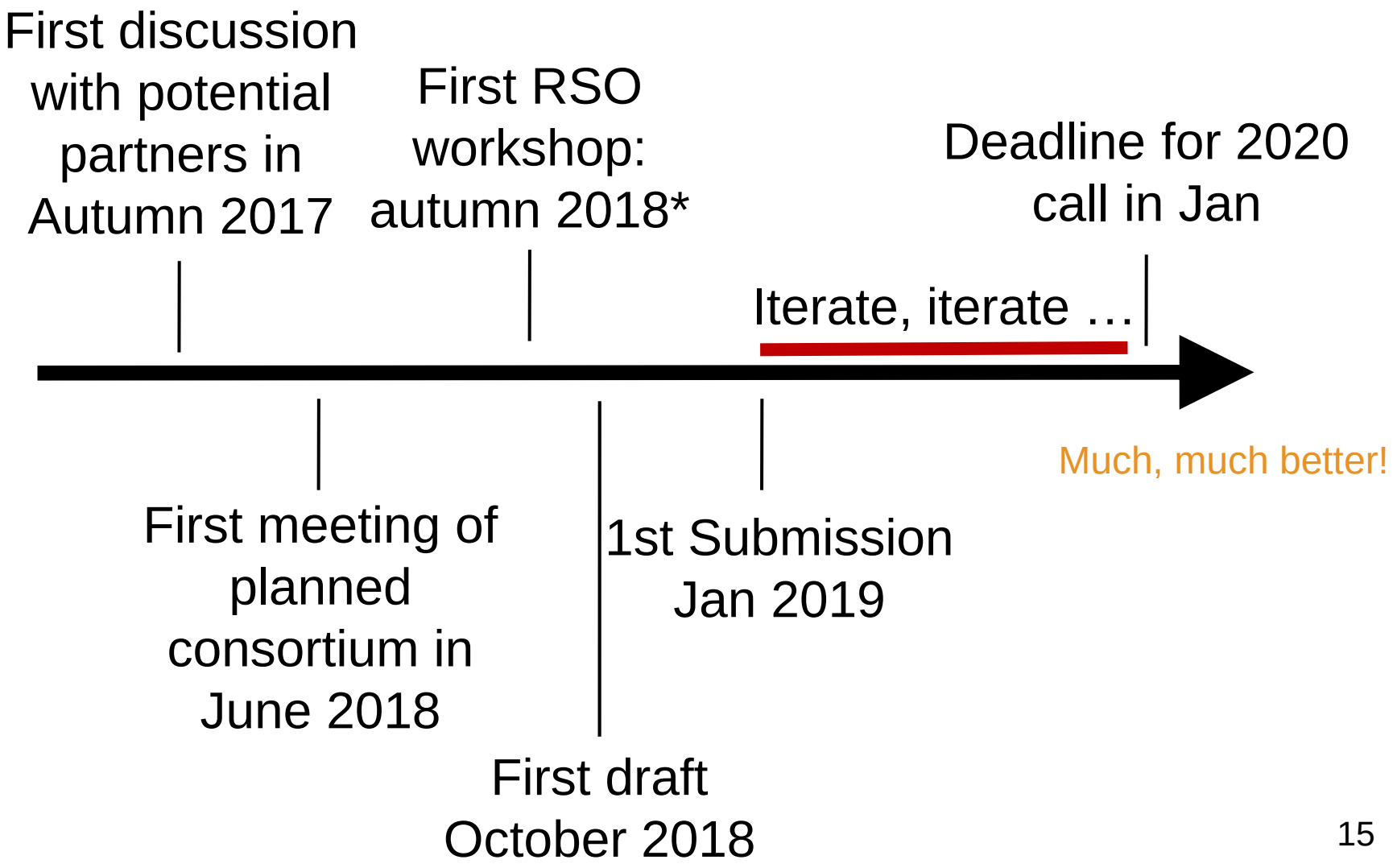

WHERE/WHEN/HOW

In addition:

- Email exchanges and in-person meetings with RSO.
- Feedback and individual discussions both in group and individually with each and every consortium member.
- Read through the somewhat dry PDFs with evaluation criteria, guidelines etc., from both the RSO and the REA.

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For the first draft:

- ~3 months working part time on this.
- Blocks of 1-2 days to refine it.

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Gathering feedback and contributions from everyone took a **looooong** time, spread over a few months.

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- Blocks of 1-2 days to refine it.

In total I would guess ~5 weeks FTE.

Reviewing the project for the second submission took ~75% as long as getting together the first draft.

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First impulse was to leverage my existing network, before having a clear project outline.

In hindsight: NOT a good strategy.

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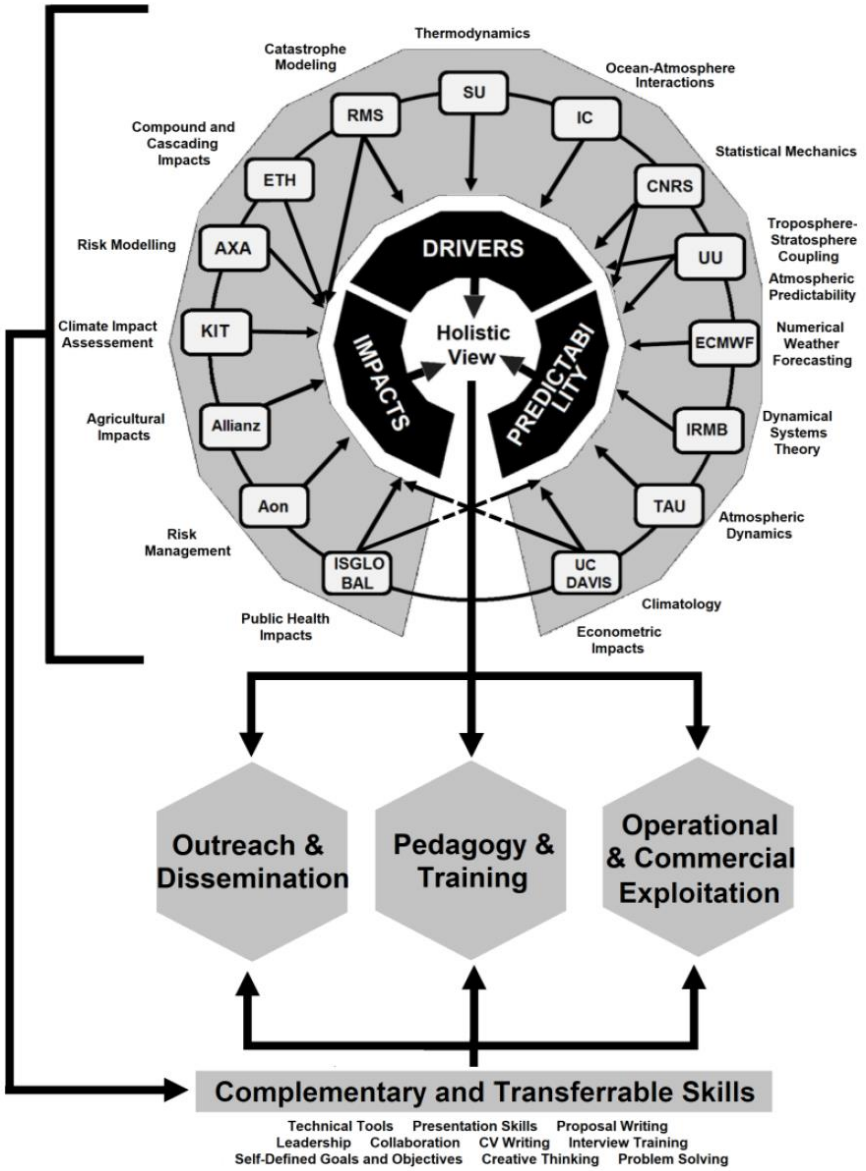
In hindsight: be clear on who you expect will do what and when.

PREPARING THE CONSORTIUM



1st submission was not funded.

2nd submission: clear picture of what everyone was contributing with.

Preparing the Consortium

”Internal” preparations: agree with department on funding of 4th year of Ph. D., administrative support, overheads etc.

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Working Towards Submission

1st submission was not funded, despite starting early and dedicating a lot of time to it.

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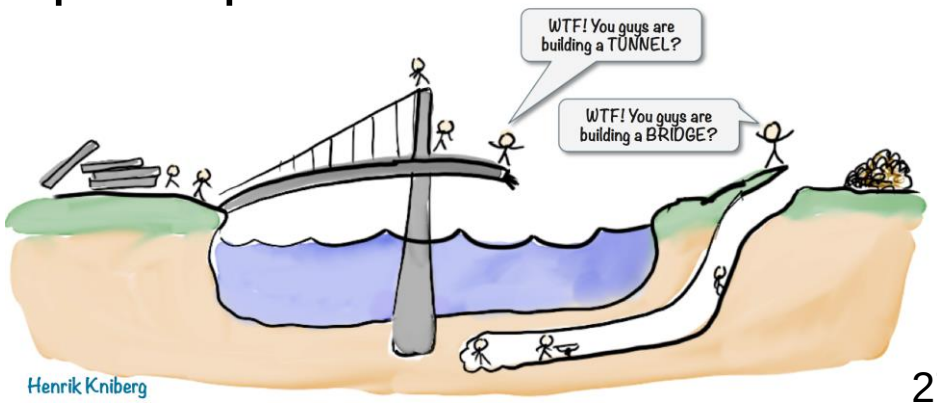
In hindsight:

- A lot of small inconsistencies in the project.
- Could tell that it was the first time we were writing the project.
- Limited contact between participants.
- Late contact with RSO.



Working Towards Submission

Main criticism: connection between different methods and approaches/Ph. D. projects ”not seamless”.

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Second time round, we had a first complete draft of all projects which made the iteration process easier.

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Main criticism: some training objectives unfeasible; career plans unclear.

”Impact” for ITNs is largely on training (which we already had) and post-Ph. D. careers!

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Second time round, **a lot** of focus on career paths.

From my perspective: Very time consuming but a potentially huge reward if successful. Extremely valuable for expanding your network.

If you apply, plan to dedicate **plenty** of time to the process, which is a lot more complex than ”just” writing a research proposal.

If you apply, be sure you actually want to do it.

It is **not a pure research project.**

Lycka till!