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Outcome of the Call for Ideas for Balloon Experiments within the HEMERA project

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The objective of the HEMERA Call for Ideas (CFI) was to assess the user needs and to support the definition of the following Call for Proposal to be issued in July 2018, for the experiment selection.

The HEMERA Call for Ideas was published in February 2018 on the webpages of the HEMERA project, on the webpage of the Swedish National Space Agency (SNSA) and on the webpages of the HEMERA partners. Information about the Call was widely distributed to various mailing lists of potentially interested parties. CFI was also promoted at several conferences such as EGU in Vienna and Mars Sample Return conference in Berlin in April 2018.

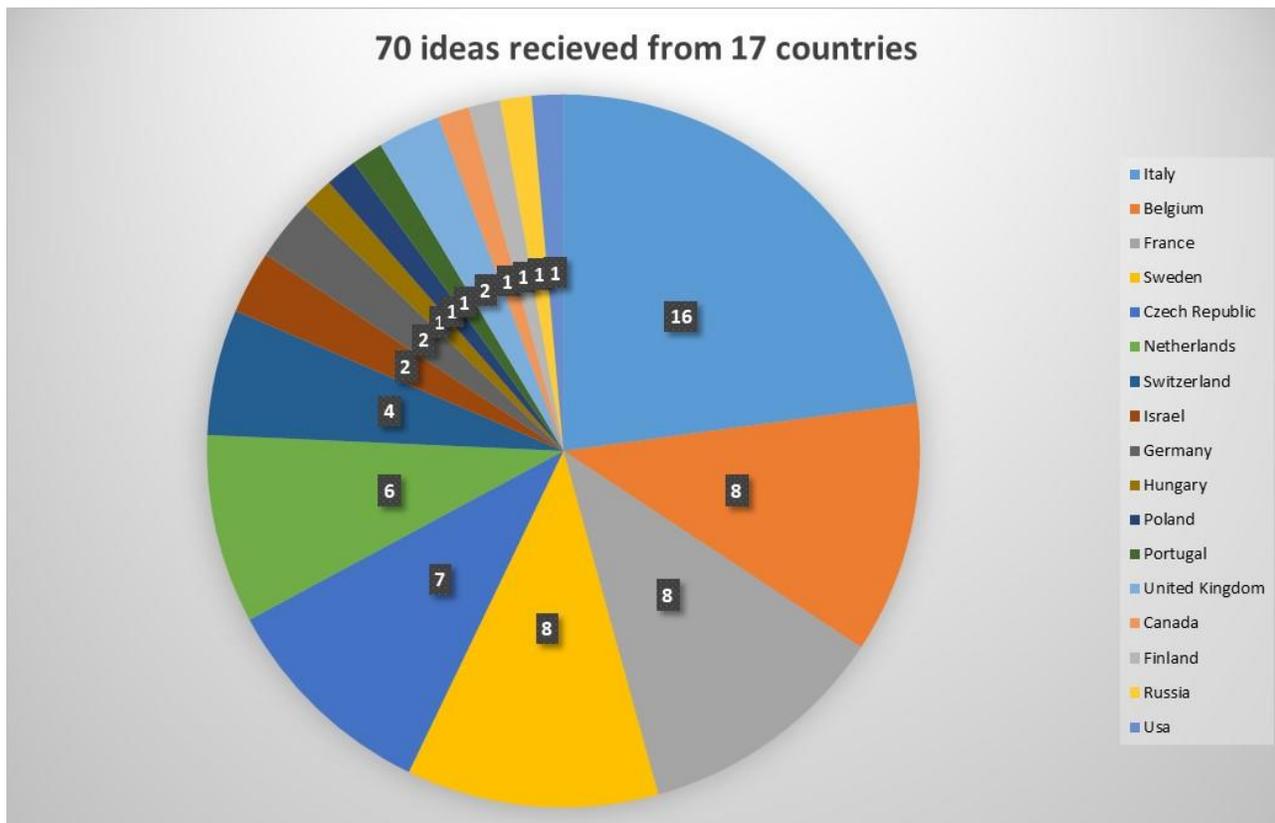


Fig. 1 Participation of various countries to CFI (numbers indicate ideas received from corresponding country).

The CFI was open to all scientists and users from the European Union member states, from countries associated to Horizon 2020 and from Canada. The deadline of the submission was April 27, 2018, 17.00 Central European Time. Participation in CFI was not mandatory for further participation in Hemera.

In total, 70 responses to the Call for Ideas were received from 17 different countries. We consider this as a very positive result. In particular, the interest from countries outside the HEMERA consortium without active involvement in the balloon-born research is very encouraging.

The ideas received dealt with various science fields, the major one was atmospheric sciences with 31 ideas submitted.

Other fields represented were astrophysics (8 ideas), technical research (14 ideas), biology/astrobiology (5 ideas). Six ideas dealt with various educational experiments. Several ideas dealt with space weather, solar physics, auroral science and Martian atmosphere etc.

The majority of the proposers were interested in Zero Pressure Balloon (ZPB) flights (59), other platforms requested were Sounding Balloons (8), Super Pressure Balloons (2) and Boundary Layer Balloons (1).

Most ideas were judged as technically feasible based on the information provided in the responses to CFI.

To summarise, the outcome of CFI was judged as very good with great interest from the user community. No show-stoppers were identified for the implementation of the Call for Proposals (CFP) and further steps of the HEMERA project. The outcome of CFI, with respect for the science areas represented, also provided useful input for definition of the composition of the Peer Review Group for the evaluation of the responses to CFP.

We recommend responders to the Call for Proposals to carefully read the information provided with the Call, in particular the Manuals for Zero Pressure Balloons and/or Sounding Balloons, published with the CFP. If questions concerning characteristics and capabilities of stratospheric balloons remain, proposers should contact HEMERA partners CNES or SSC beforehand to receive technical advice, see contact details in the Description of the Call for Proposals.