Science Link – Effects and Added Value of the Cooperation

Presentation of Preliminary Results

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Agenda of the Presentation

- Methodology and Approach of the Study
- Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project
  - Which effects of Science Link do project partners experience?
  - How do the companies evaluate Science Link?
  - Where are possible challenges and frictions?
- Science Link 2.0? Expectations and Recommendations

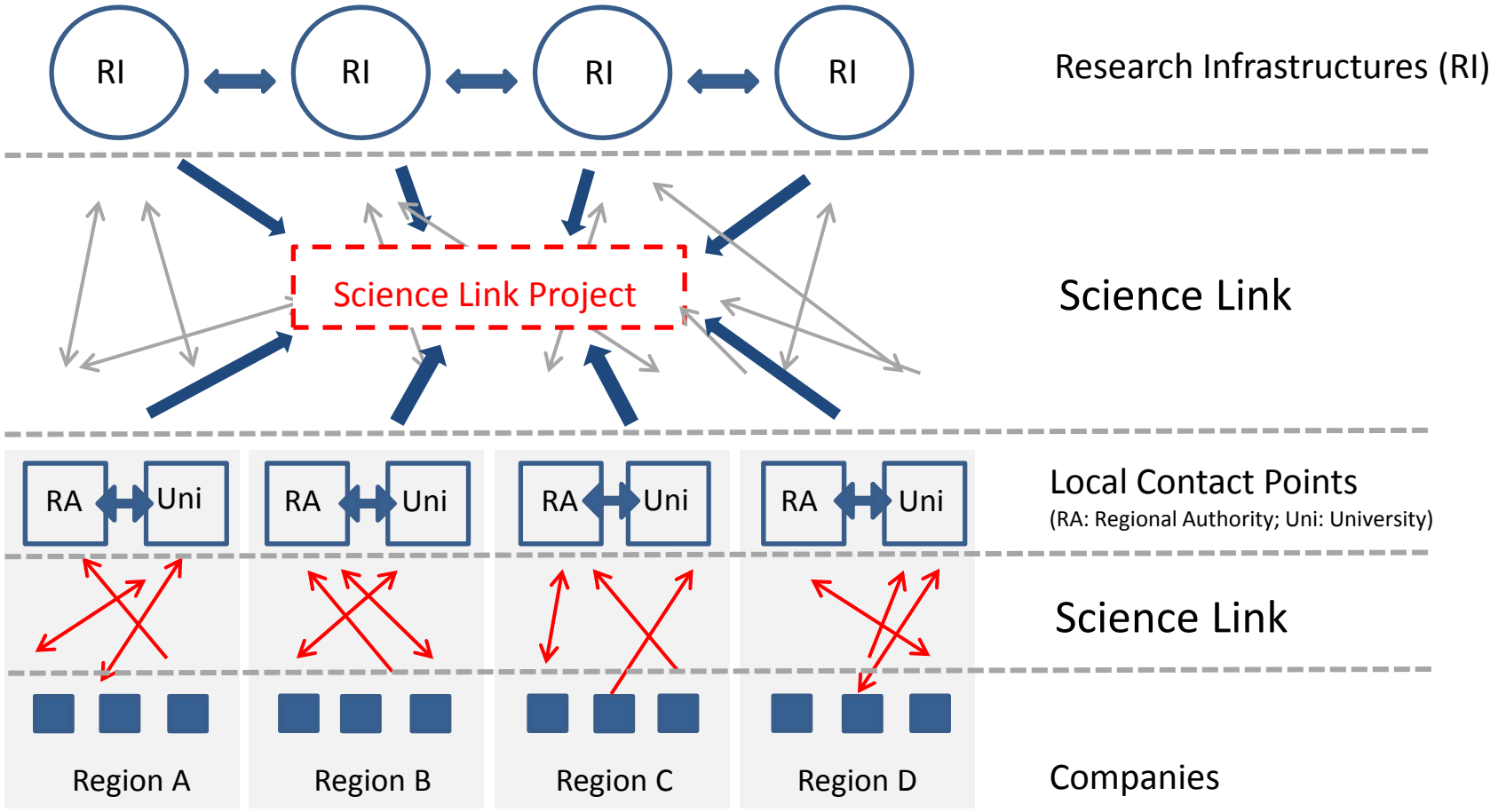
Methodology and Approach of the Study

Scientific Study on the Effects and Added Value of the Science Link project

- Timeframe: February-July 2013
- Objective:
  - How are project partners and companies evaluating the effects and added value of the Science Link project?
  - What are the expectations towards a permanent research network ("Science Link 2.0")?
- Methodology:
  - Qualitative Approach
  - 15 Interviews: 7 companies, 4 research infrastructures, 4 local contact points

Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project

1. “Structural Added Value“ of Science Link



Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project

2. The Perspective of the Research Infrastructures

- "*New Dimension of Service Orientation*":
  - "the pooling of their equipment and services as well as jointly approaching companies brings a new quality of customer-orientation" (Interview RI:B)
- *"Industrial Spirit to Research Infrastructures":*
  - An adaptation of the structures towards the companies' needs through human resources (more consultation & guidance), customer orientation (waiting time, beam time allocation), change in equipment
  - "The industry has different expectations on what kind of equipment should be available." (Interview RI:B)
  - Mutual Learning Process
- "*Geography does matter*":
  - Through the Local Contact Points, Science Link provides access to new networks and markets, overcomes socio-cultural challenges (e.g. language)

Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project

3. The Perspective of the Local Contact Points

- *"Regional and Interregional Networking"*:
  - For regional authorities: New relations to large-scale infrastructure facilities
  - For universities: Intensify cooperation with RI and mutual learning and exchange process
  - Incentive to establish new or re-new relations to partners and companies in the region
- *"Attractiveness and Competitiveness of Institutional and Regional Services"*
  - Access to international network and funding opportunities for companies as "add-on" to existing service palette
  - Visibility and marketing through Science Link
  - Expanding the existing equipment and infrastructure, no large-scale infrastructures available in region
  - But: no access for academic researchers

Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project

4. The Perspective of the Companies

- "*Information Source*"
- "*Impetus and Competitive Edge for Development*":
  - Access to high-class research infrastructure a financial and organisational challenge – otherwise not possible mainly because of time and finances
  - Research provides impetus for development of existing products and ideas for new products
- *"Open Space for Innovation"*
  - "When you are a start-up you need to be extremely focused on resources (…), so this gave us an opportunity to look a bit wider." (Interview Company S)
  - "… you have to make some risk assessment and in this case it would be very difficult to assume and therefore get a value on that and therefore to get the financial support." (Interview Company D)

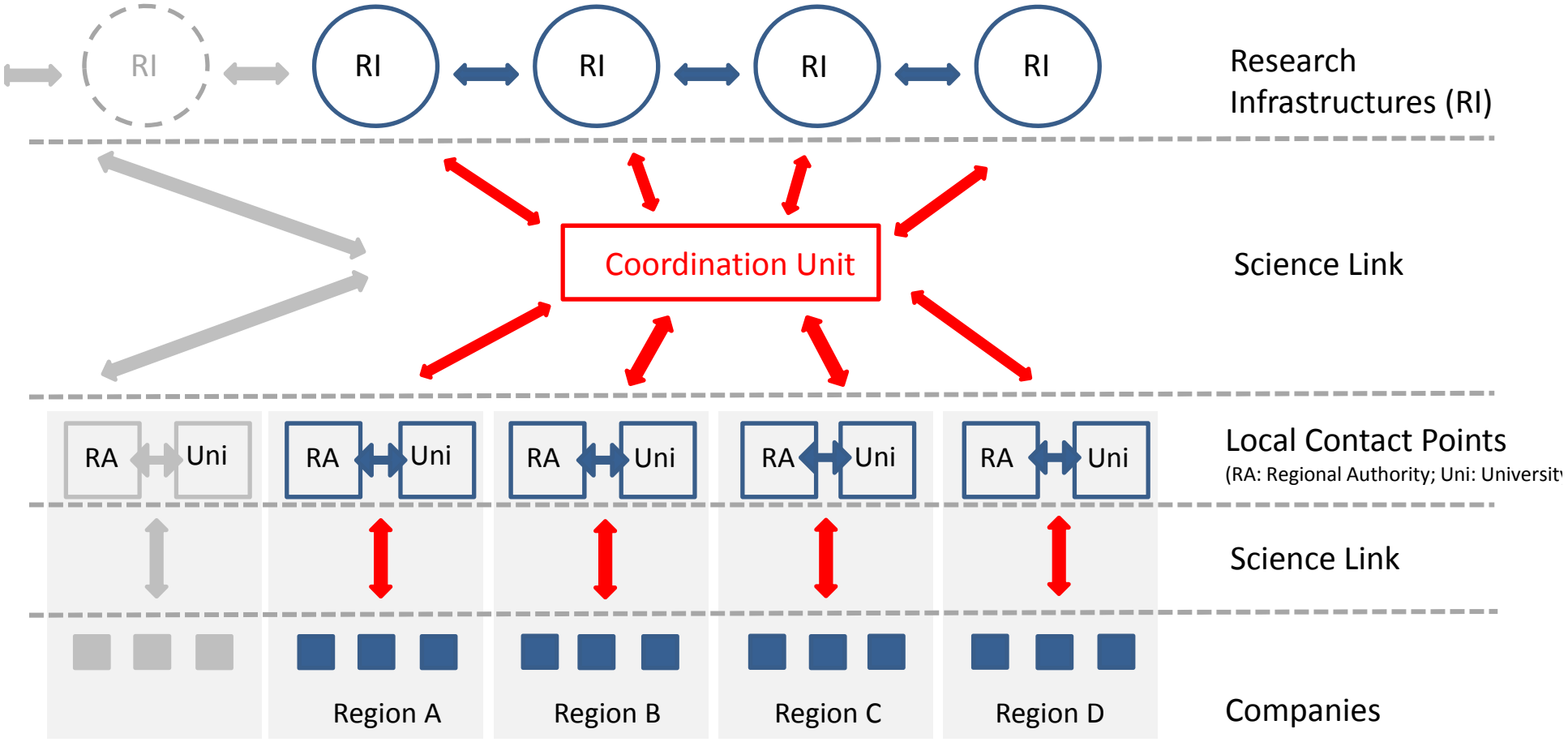
Effects and Added Value of the Science Link Project

5. Current challenges and frictions within the Science Link project

	"Information Asymmetry"	*"Institutional Logics"*
Research Infrastructure	• Companies need intensive support and consultancy before, during and after research • Assistance regarding equipment and measurements	• Currently strong focus on academic users (equipment, organisation) • Fully booked and long-term planning
Local Contact Points	• Need to understand the RIs • Consultancy, "the companies don't even think about (…) what kind of material research they would like to have" (Interview RA)	• Service Orientation • "Two Hats": need to understand companies' logics + provide scientific support • "Independent Brooker"
Companies	• Little knowledge: "there is a gap (…) RIs had problems understanding the companies problems and vice versa" (Interview UL) • Need for transparent information and communication flow, reliable contact person	• Highest priority: fast, easy and cost-efficient access • "Product Logic": Consultancy, Implementation, Evaluation • Uncertainty and Hesitation about IP-rights

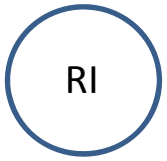
Science Link 2.0? Expectations and Recommendations

1. Potential Structure of Science Link 2.0



Science Link 2.0? Expectations and Recommendations

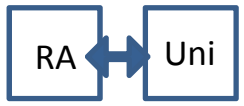
2. Ideas for Improvement on the Cooperation Levels



- Institutional adaptation to the needs of companies
- Service-orientation regarding availability and consultation

Coordination Unit

- Institutionalised and independent coordination unit
- Permanent Contact Person
- Familiar with services of all RIs
- Tasks: Assistance to LCP, Training Sessions, Selection Process
- Even more important with expanded network



- Strong cooperation between academic and business side
- Important Initial Contact – Conferences, workshops, personal
- Strong national networks

- Clear communication and support chain
- Local Consulation to overcome uncertainties (“protected arena”)

Science Link 2.0? Expectations and Recommendations

3. Potential Consequences for the provided services

Service	*Finances*

• Initial Contact
  • Interactive Workshops + Contact Platforms
  • "Protected" Arena for Exchange
 	
• Coordination Unit
  • "Face" of the Project
  • Support to LCP and RIs (Training, Consulation,…)
  • Marketing
  • Transparent and faster communication and selection
	• Initial Contact should be free-of-charge – "it is the job of the network to convince the companies' that it is worth its price" (Interview RI)
	
	• Willingness of companies to pay for the service
	
	• Multi-step financial model
	
	• Cost efficient services – sending in samples

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