ELIXIR

Safeguarding the results of life science research in Europe

European Life Sciences Infrastructure for Biological Information
www.elixir-europe.org

ELIXIR's mission

To build a sustainable European infrastructure for biological information, supporting life science research and its translation to:

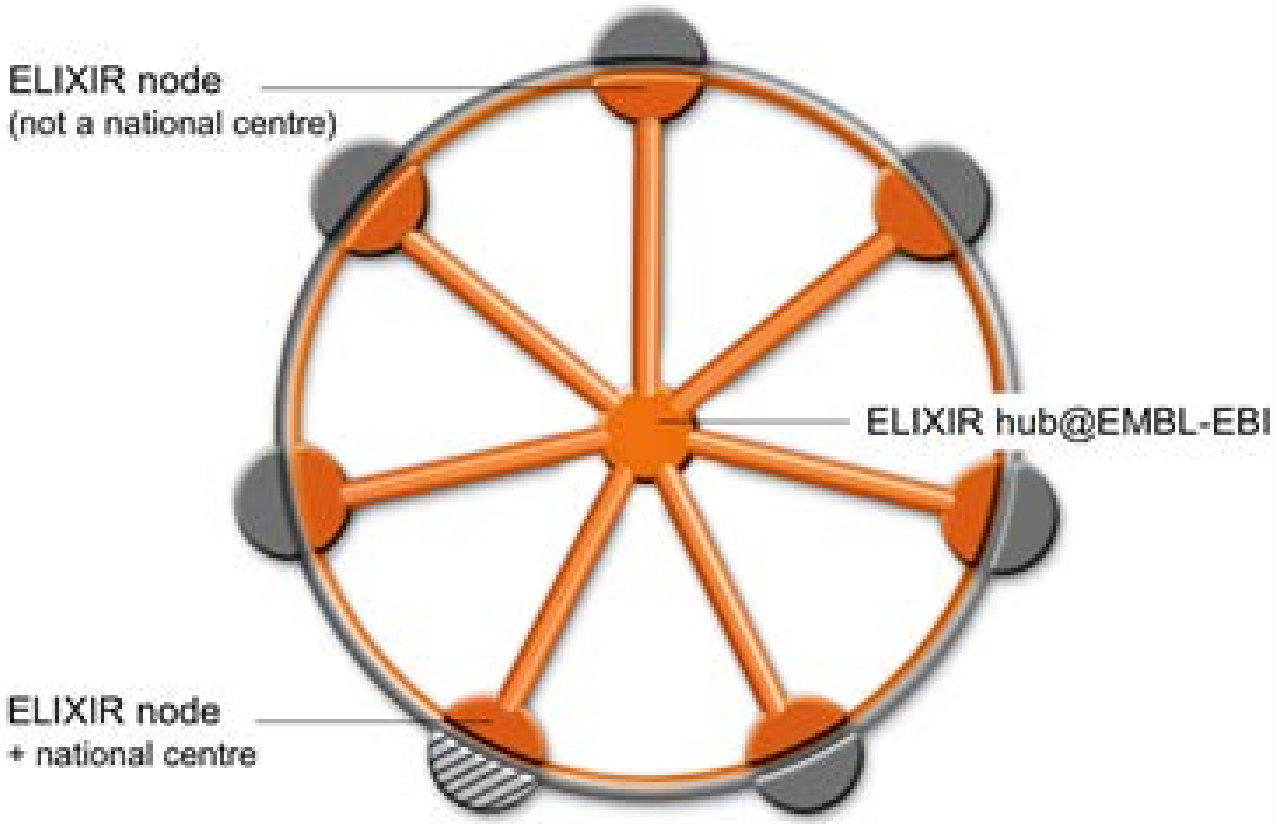
medicine

environment

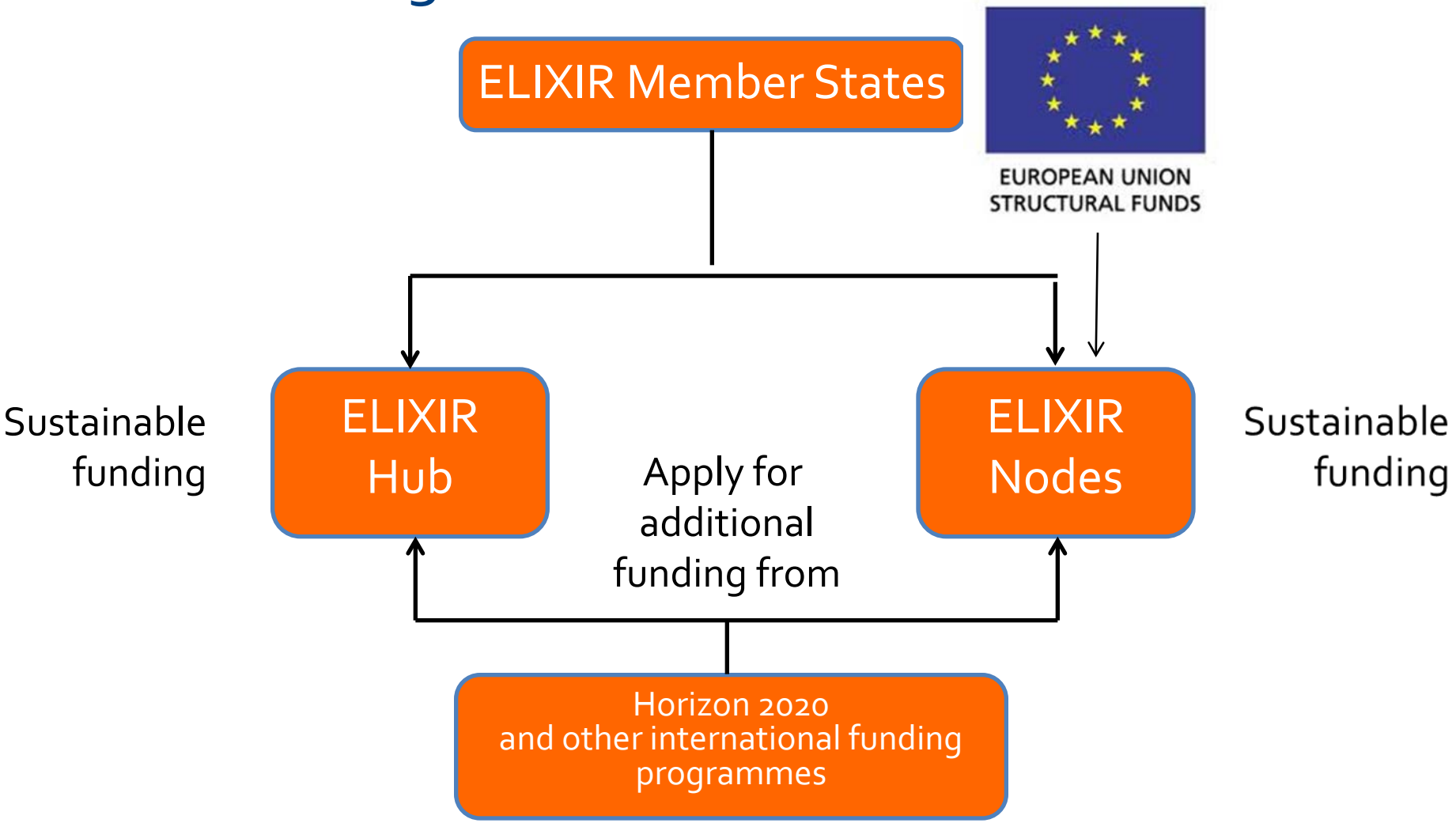
bioindustries

society

Structure and funding of ELIXIR



ELIXIR's funding model



Supporting ELIXIR Nodes

A Guide to EU Structural Funds and ELIXIR

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1. Background

EU Structural Funds are a financial instrument of the European Union, which are used to reduce economic disparities between regions. Unlike EU R&D programmes, which are administered by the

Examples from ELIXIR Nodes

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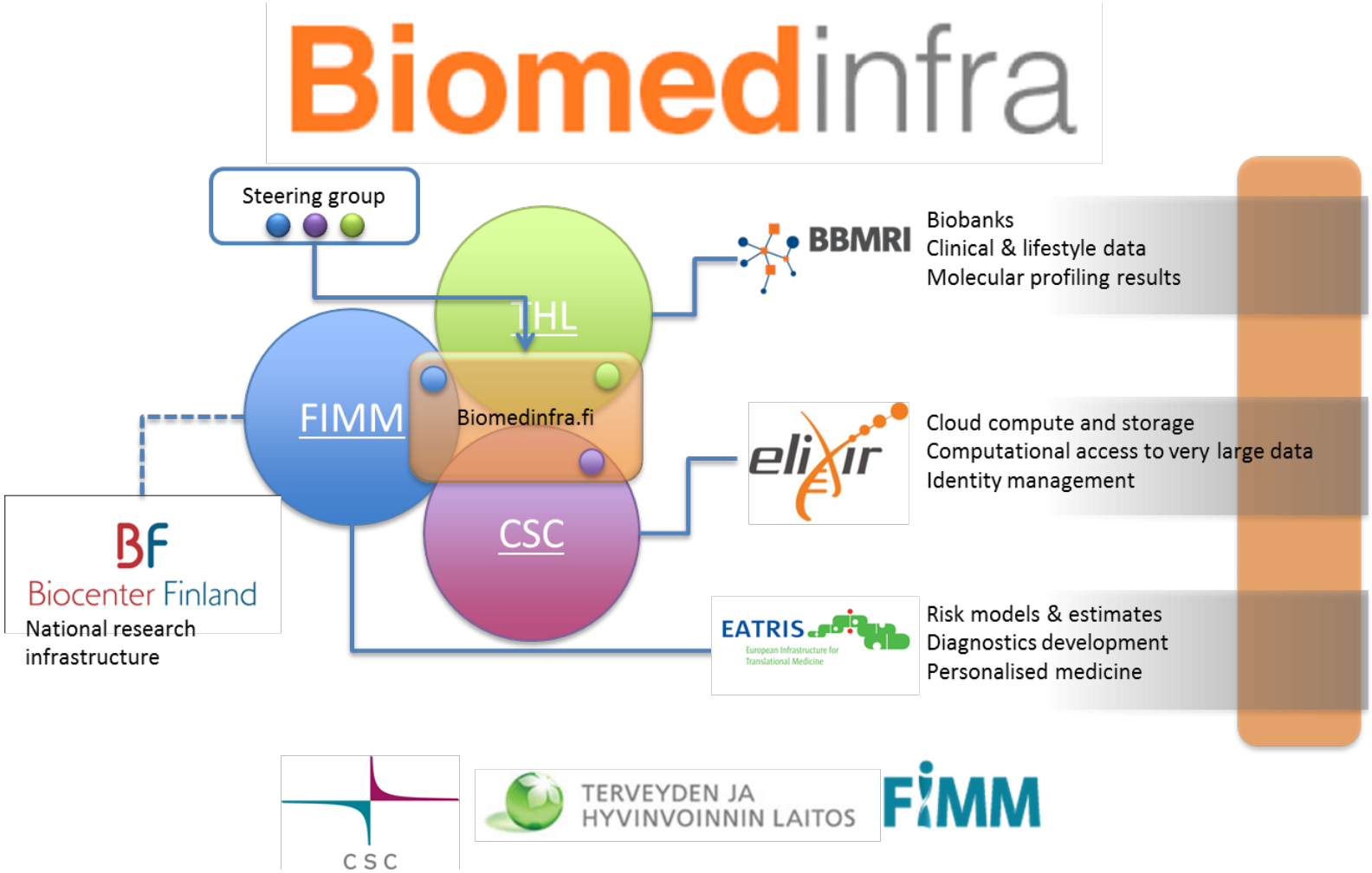
ELIXIR Finland



ELIXIR Finland

- City of Kajaani used EU Structural Funds to support the conversion of paper storage warehouse into data centre
- CSC IT Center for Science, which is lead partner in Finnish ELIXIR Node, hosts Finland's largest super-computing systems in the data centre

Estonia ELIXIR Node

- Consortium led by University of Tartu and includes Tallinn University of Technology and Estonian Biocenter

ELIXIR Node focusses on:

- **Maintenance, upgrade and international integration of Estonian tools and databases**
- Porting bioinformatics solution on the cloud and exploring alternative cost effective hardware
- Developing, offering, and intermediating training on bioinformatics tools, services and infrastructure
- Interfacing with BBMRI Research Infrastructure

ELIXIR Estonia

Priority 2: Improving the competitiveness of Estonian R&D through the research programmes and modernisation of higher education and R&D institutions

Investment is granted for the development of thematic R&D programmes targeted at long-term economic development focusing on the areas where Estonia has strong scientific potential, as well as for the development of centres of excellence, ***infrastructure and equipment of R&D*** *and higher education institutions.* ***Better international cooperation is envisaged.***

Programmes

- support scientific research (centers of excellence)
- internationalisation - **current funding source for ELIXIR Estonia**
- science infrastructures

ELIXIR Czech Republic - CEITEC

- Czech Node is a consortium uniting 7 institutions including CEITEC – Central European Institute of Technology
- CEITEC received over €200 million through ERDF – approx 80% towards construction, labs, equip and 20% on staff and running costs - ELIXIR related investment is just a small part of that
- CEITEC will offer following services within Czech ELIXIR Node:
  - Structural bioinformatics tools, ie, MOLE, SiteBinder and MotiveExplorer
  - Human and plant genome data – storage and analysis
- CEITEC is involved also in INSTRUCT, EuroBioImaging and EATRIS

CEITEC
central european institute of technology
BRNO | CZECH REPUBLIC

Why is it difficult?

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Construction progress of ELIXIR Hub building

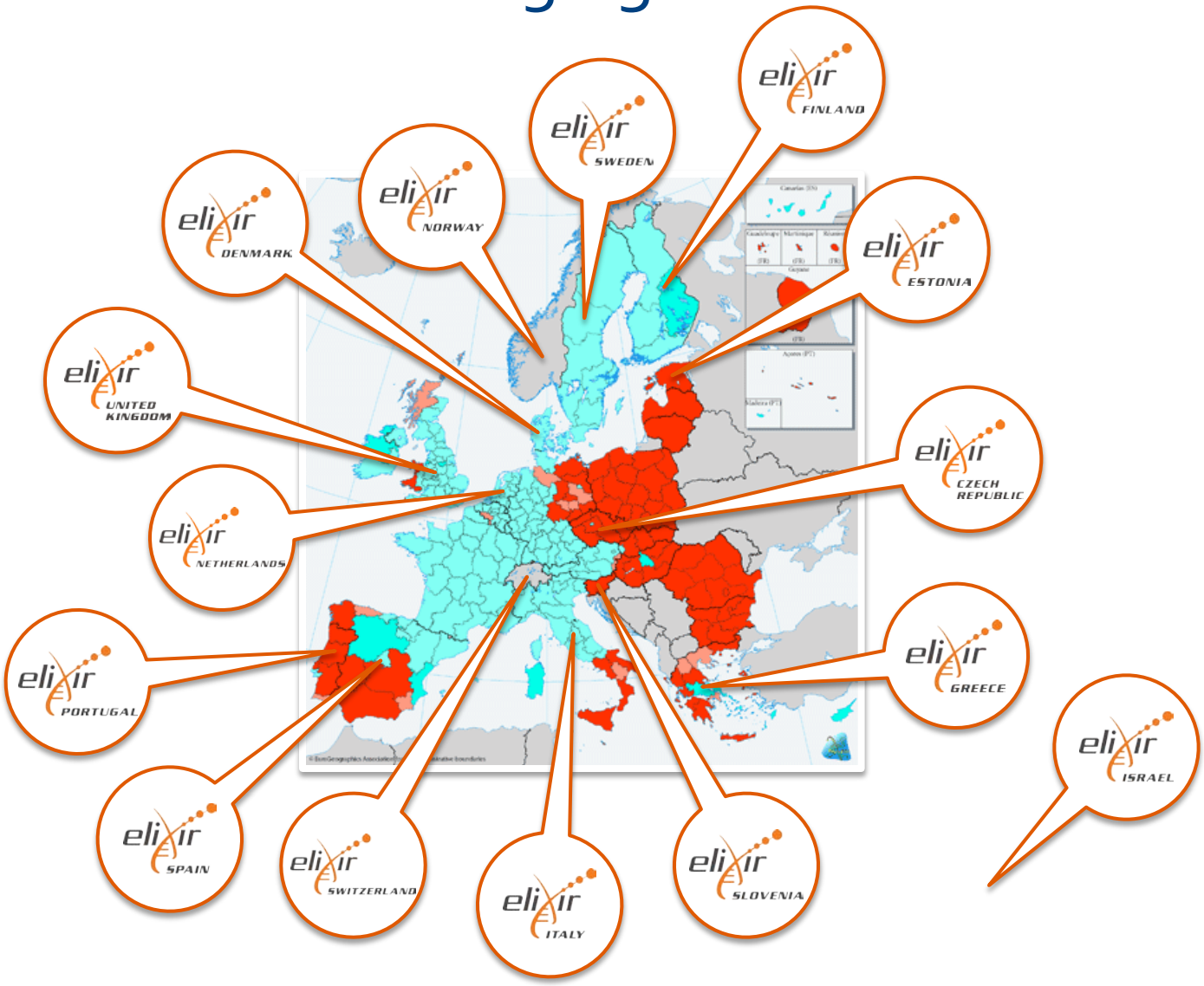
Building ready for occupancy in September 2013

London Data Centre

Commercial lease taken in Tier 3+ European data centre

1. Oliver's Yard data centre in Central London
2. Powergate data centre in West London

ELIXIR Nodes and Managing Authorities



Challenges for a distributed e-Infrastructures

- Transferring Structural Funds outside national boundaries
- Most Nodes comprise several national centres of excellence
- ELIXIR Nodes individually are small and specialised – seems easier to access EU Structural Funds for large, high-visibility, capital intensive projects
- Most of costs of ELIXIR are operating costs
- The scientists involved in ELIXIR Nodes are not typically experts in EU Structural Funds
- ELIXIR Hub can not offer much expertise as priorities of Managing Authority are set locally (meetings in local language, etc)
- Difficult for the ELIXIR Hub to coordinate activities across infrastructure as a whole

Ideal scenario

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Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020

The Union funding will contribute to, as appropriate:

A. the preparatory phase of future infrastructures (e.g. detailed construction plans, legal arrangements, multiannual planning);

B. the implementation phase (e.g. R&D and engineering work jointly with industry and users, development of **regional partner facilities** aiming at a more balanced development of the European Research Area); and/or

C. the operation phase (e.g. access, data handling, outreach, training and international cooperation activities).

Suggestions for steps forward?

- Training/support for Nodes in **how** to work with Managing Authorities
- More knowledge of ESFRI RIs within Managing Authorities - Smart Specialisation Strategies
- Continuation of guidance/documents for combining research funding and Structural Funds
- Welcome the proposal to invest more Structural Funds on research and innovation than at present
- Welcome proposal to allow for more EU Structural Funds to be spent outside own region
- Managing Authorities should establish explicit programmes/ priorities that facilitate access to international infrastructures

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