



eNewsletter 4/2008

CALL FOR PROPOSALS for the Location of EGI.org

The EGI Design Study Policy Board invited National Grid Initiatives to place bids for the location of the new organization. The Call was launched on the 1st of October and will continue until the 7th of January 2009.

In 2008, EGI_DS focused on writing the EGI Blueprint document, a proposal designed to determine how to establish a sustainable grid infrastructure. The next step for the project was to determine the best location for the EGI organization (EGI.org).

The launch of this Call for Proposals invites National Grid Initiatives (NGI) and NGI-approved organizations to place bids for the long-term accommodation of the EGI.org central office which will permanently host up to 50 people. The office must be located in an EU Member State or in an EU associated state, and be available by January 2010.

Furthermore, the bidder should propose a legal form that could satisfy requirements as set out by the EGI_DS Policy Board. Given the international nature of the EGI.org, its central office should be easy to reach from most points in Europe and should also be able to provide facilities for meetings. Bidders are also asked to provide an overview of the applicable employment conditions, bearing in mind that staff will be recruited throughout Europe (EU Member States and also other European States).

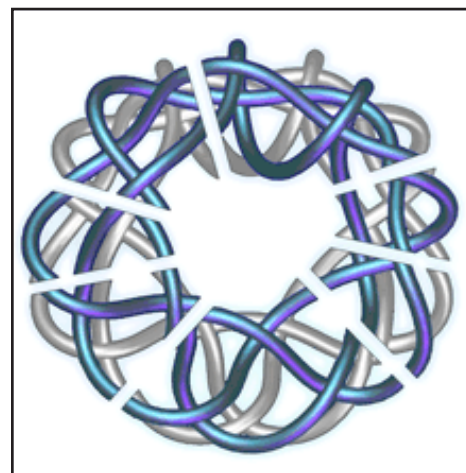
Additionally, EGI.org will have impor-

tant cash flows within Europe, and bidders have to therefore provide details regarding to the fiscal environment in which the EGI.org would operate.

"I am extremely pleased with the outcome of the EGI Policy Board. The unanimous decision to launch a call for proposals regarding the site of the EGI headquarters marks the first concrete step towards the implementation of EGI. In only a few weeks we will have an expression of interest in our hands from several European governments willing to host EGI. Thanks to this strong commitment, I am confident that we will be able to establish EGI well before the EGEE-III project finishes in May 2010. Together with the site we will select an EGI legal framework which will be based either on local national law or the new European Research Infrastructure legal framework, presently under discussion in Brussels.", says Guy Wormser (CNRS) who was in charge of the preparation of the Call for Proposals in the EGI_DS.

An announcement of short-listed candidates will be published by the EGI_DS Policy Board on the 6th of February 2009.

According to the plan, the location will be selected and approved by the EGI_DS Policy Board in the EGI_DS Policy Board meeting at the 4th EGEE User Forum in Catania, Italy, on the 2nd of March 2009.



The EGI Design Study (EGI_DS) project aims at establishing a sustainable long-term grid infrastructure in Europe and at moving from the existing short term funded project structure to a sustainable service.

The EGI_DS is financed by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme. It was launched in September 2007 and will continue until November 2009. It is planned that the EGI organization will be operational at the beginning of 2010.

<http://www.eu-egi.eu>

EGI Call for Proposals:

<http://www.eu-egi.eu/documents/other/call-for-proposals/>

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EGI TRANSITION WORKSHOP - Summary of the Event 1/2

The EGI Transition Workshop was organised during the EGEE'08 conference in Istanbul (Turkey) on Monday, 22 September, 2008. The workshop focused on the transition from the present EU project based e-Infrastructures to a long term sustainable EGI model. The EGI Transition Workshop was followed by a closed EGI Policy Board Meeting.

First Session

The workshop organiser **Per Öster** (CSC) welcomed more than 100 participants to the workshop and presented the programme of the day. The workshop was organized in two sessions; the first part included presentations held by representatives from the EGI design study project and selected e-infrastructure projects. The second part was a panel discussion.

Ludek Matyska, EGI-DS Project Director, gave a presentation "EGI Blueprint or Do not be afraid of EGI". He stressed that the European Grid Initiative is just a culmination of national grid efforts, and that there is no reason to fear the EGI. Matyska took a brief look on the EGI Blueprint draft that Dieter Kranzlmüller had presented in greater detail earlier during the Opening Plenary. Matyska focused on the construction of EGI, NGIs, the implications at national and international levels, and the transition to the EGI model. Matyska stated that the EGI organization (EGI.org) is a small coordination body governed by National Grid Initiatives (NGIs) and through them by users.



Bob Jones, Project Director of the EGEE-III project, reviewed the transition from EGEE-III to EGI from the EGEE's point of view. He listed recommendations made by EGEE for the EGI Blueprint, and presented a transition plan. The transition plan details the steps needed to migrate EGEE's operations to EGI. It identifies major risks and shortcomings, and develops stop-gap strategies for use should a full transition seem unlikely in the remaining lifetime of EGEE-III. The transition plan may result in a modified Description of Work for EGEE-III updated for the second year.

Ognjen Prnjat from SEE-GRID-SCI (SEE-GRID e-Infrastructure for regional eScience) made a presentation about the South-East European initiatives for regional e-Infrastructure sustainability. SEE-GRID-SCI aims to engage international user communities e.g. meteorology, seismology, and environmental protection in its work. It tries to provide application-specific ser-

vice extensions and infrastructure for new communities, to consolidate actions towards long-term sustainability and European Grid Initiative inclusion, and to strengthen the regional and national human networks. One of the core objectives is to develop and strengthen the coordination and cooperation of national e-Infrastructure programmes in the region of South-East Europe.

EGI is seen as a viable model, however with some features that do not cater for regional sustainability and collaboration. Prnjat underlined a need for a more dynamic, free and flexible model for scientific collaborations. SEEGRID would like to see the EGI.org only as a purely operational coordination and harmonization body.

Hermann Lederer from the DEISA 2 project held a presentation about DEISA2 User Communities, the HPC ecosystem and EGI. The DEISA2 project aims to consolidate the existing DEISA infrastructure and to continue activities and services that currently contribute to the effective support of world-class computational science in Europe. A focus is on provisioning and operating the specific infrastructure services that allow users to work efficiently within a distributed high performance computing environment.

DEISA2 will try to evolve the DEISA infrastructure towards a robust and persistent European HPC ecosystem, by enhancing the existing services, including support for European Virtual Communities, collaborating with new European initiatives; especially with PRACE

that will enable shared European PetaFlop/s supercomputer systems. It will also advance the existing distributed European HPC environment to a turnkey operational solution for a persistent European HPC infrastructure.

According to Lederer, it is expected that the concept for an integrated HPC infrastructure will essentially be based on national supercomputing centres of the member states. Conceptually this is very similar to the EGI approach with the NGI as the basis. Therefore, there is a high need for cooperation between EGI and DEISA in the areas of infrastructure services and user support. Key areas include the user community support in the various scientific disciplines, common AAAA (Authentication, Authorization, Accounting and Auditing), an access to data repositories and high-speed networks.



EGI panel discussion with representatives of DEISA 2, D4Science, PRACE, SEE-GRID-SCI, EELA-2, WLCG, DORII AND BalticGrid2.

Second Session

Per Öster acted as a moderator in the panel discussion that involved the following representatives:

- DEISA2: Hermann Lederer
- D4Science: Pagano Pasquale
- PRACE: Peter Kunszt
- SEE-GRID-SCI: Ognjen Prnjat
- EELA-2: Bernard Marechal
- WLCG: Jamie Shiers
- DORII: Marcin Plociennik
- BalticGrid2: Algimantas Juozapavicius

Underlying topic for the discussion was the transition to, or interaction with a forthcoming EGI organization. Several topics were discussed;

Usage Drivers

Access to the most powerful supercomputing architectures is needed in

Europe. It is vital to collaborate and to share data and resources, not just to obtain resources. There is a need for dynamic, new groups building collaborations and a new dynamic ecosystem supporting the establishment of Virtual Organizations (VO).

Major challenges in operating grid

The support for single projects is sufficient, but the support for VOs in unstructured communities is a new and large challenge. Issues of autonomy and competition have to be dealt with, as well as the peer review and the technical HPC conformity review process. The challenge is to offer a stable service while architecture, middleware and applications are changing. It was concluded that the different projects together, in a very positive sense, provides a huge legacy for a future consolidated European e-Infrastructure.



EGI had an information stand at the EGEE'08 event in Istanbul, and hosted more than 150 visitors.

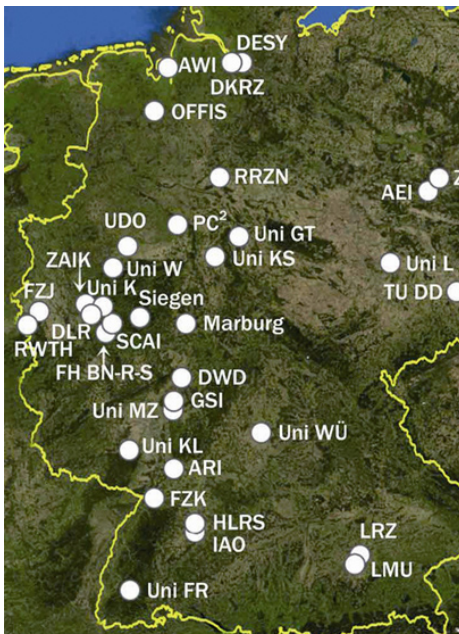
EGEE 09 CONFERENCE

The next EGEE conference will take place on the 21st - 25th of September 2009. The event will be hosted by Port d'Informacio Cientifica (PIC) in Barcelona (Spain).

In 2004 various German researchers met to discuss the requirements and process for further establishing Grid technology in Germany. Although some German institutions already had a long history of Grid activities, including European projects like EDG or the middleware UNICORE, the production use of Grid technology was largely restricted to the high energy physics and astrophysics communities.

Support from the Ministry of Education and Research

In 2005, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) started the official D-Grid programme by funding five academic communities: high energy physics, astrophysics, climate research, medical research and engineering. The Ministry also dedicated an integration project to address basic software components, Grid operation and deployment, network and security as well as coordination and sustainability. Later TextGrid, a community from the humanities joined this first group of D-Grid projects.



D-GRID in Germany in 2008

As D-Grid is user driven, communities have the choice between three well-established middlewares: the US-based GLOBUS, the European gLite and UNICORE which is frequently implemented in high performance computing installations. In particular, providers of compute resources were given help to allow resource access from these three middlewares. Therefore, users from different communities have access to a large amount of compute resources regardless of their choice of middleware.

Thanks to the generous support of the BMBF, new Grid compute and data resources are now widespread in Germany. Together with the Grid resources directly provided by the various centres, more than 20000 cores and more than 2000 TB of storage are available to D-Grid users.

D-GRID 2

A second BMBF call for D-Grid projects was targeted towards higher-level services in the Grid and communities with commercially oriented partners, in order to open D-Grid towards industrial users. Further, there are some projects that addressed gaps discovered during execution of the various projects.

The integration project has also been extended until 2010 to establish a sustainable basic infrastructure that provides basic operation services for the communities. While the communities are free to define most properties of their Grids, there are security and operation issues that are better addressed in a centralized approach in order to assure sharing of resources by different communities.

Moreover, it is more efficient to concentrate support for basic software components at some centres instead of requiring each community to generate a separate support structure.

International collaboration

The increased number of D-Grid projects requires a structure to assure seamless cooperation between these projects. To this end, the D-Grid Corporation was established in 2008. As well as coordinating project interaction, the consortium will particularly address sustainability issues and represent D-Grid at the international level.

Most D-Grid communities are strong supporters of using the Grid for international research cooperation. Therefore, D-Grid welcomes the formation of a European Grid Initiative, as it offers the opportunity to enable seamless operation of Grids on a European scale by defining common services and interfaces.

In addition, outsourcing of tasks like software and user support can increase the efficiency of national Grid operation. This is a consistent extension of the D-Grid operational concept to the international level.

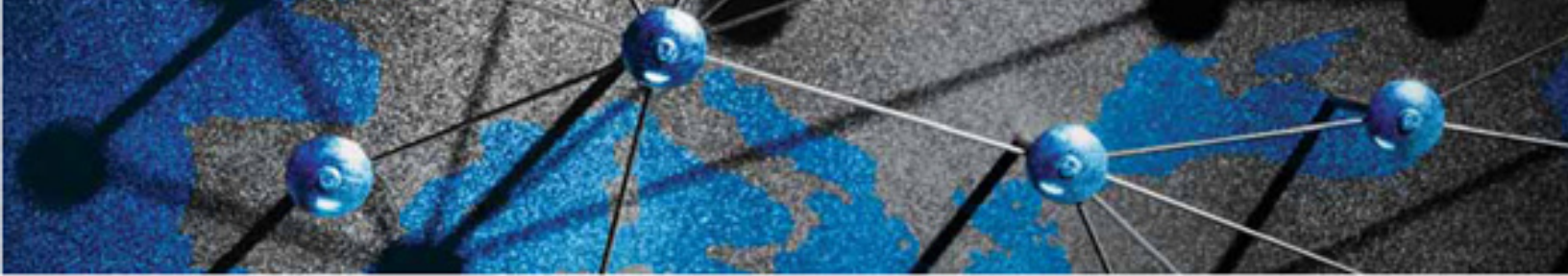
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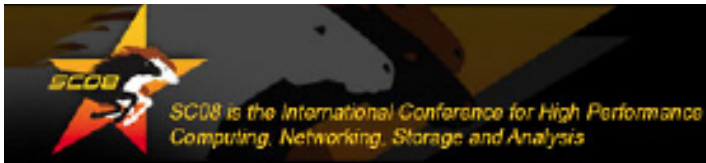
EGI EVENTS

SC08

15-21 November 2008, Austin (Texas-US)

EGI had an information stand at the SC08 event and hosted hundreds of visitors. Ludek Matyska, Dieter Kranzlmüller and Per Öster held presentations about EGI at the EGEE stand. Many other representatives of the project were also present at the event.

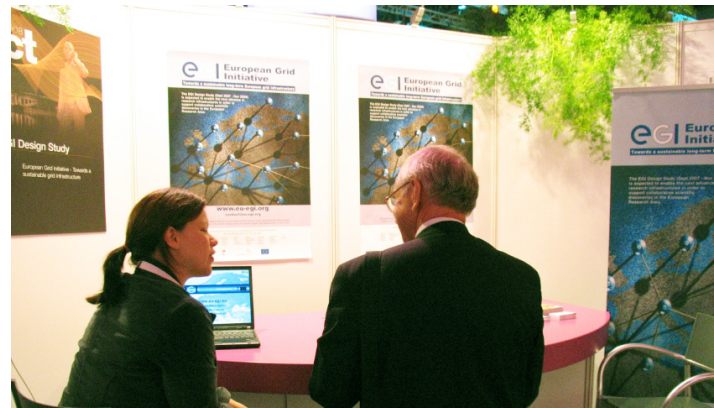
EGI will also participate at the SC09 event held in Portland (Oregon, US) in November 2009.



ICT'08

25-27 November 2008, Lyon (France)

EGI had an information stand at the biennial ICT Event (formerly called the "IST Event") which is the most important forum for discussing research and public policy in information and communication technologies at European level. In 2008, the event was organised during the French EU presidency in Lyon.



EGI Policy Board Meeting

20 January 2009, Prague (Czech Republic)

The EGI Design Study project is currently finalizing the EGI Blueprint for the future European Grid Initiative and its coordinating body EGI.org. In parallel, the bid for location of the EGI.org is under way.

The EGI Policy Board meeting in Prague will concentrate on endorsement of the Blueprint and also selection and confirmation of the EGI.org bids evaluation committee.

Please note that the EGI Policy Board Meeting is a closed event, reserved only for NGI representatives

More information:

<http://web.eu-egi.eu/events/workshops-and-meetings/egi-policy-board-meeting-prague/>



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