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Experience in community building and user championing

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Description of the work

Community building and user championing are a major part of the business of EGI and this is reflected in the range of interconnected activities that support this mission. EGI obviously depends upon users for its continued success and growth. To this end there is a distinction between the role of support for existing users which is now part of the operational services whereas out reach to new and emerging communities is undertaken by a twin approach of Community Outreach and more specifically, Technical Outreach to New Communities (TONC). Community Outreach is focussed on identifying these new, emerging and potential communities and reaching out to them in the form of participation at their community events and also in inviting and encouraging them or at least their significant representatives to attend EGI's Forums. Attendance at the Forums enables opportunities to occur the communities to interact with the developers, providers and other communities that make up the EGI community.

Once these initial introductions have been made, specific technical interactions can be established and developed in the form of Virtual Team (VT) projects with self-selecting NGI representatives and partner projects, specialist Task Forces and even new fully fledged funded projects. NGI International Liaisons (NILs) have been established at each of the NGIs to handle such non-operational initiatives and develop the reach out activities with the user communities. The work of the NILs will be presented and some examples given of their role and successes to date. To extend these activities another role is being developed, that of EGI Champion. These will be identified from amongst the user communities and will typically be associated with a particular institution. As experts in their field they will be ideally placed to champion the benefits of using the infrastructure to a new cluster of users across Europe and beyond.

Link for further information

http://www.egi.eu

Wider impact of this work

The main impact of this work is to grow the usage of the infrastructure in a variety of ways. The breadth of user communities has been broadened with the addition of new VRCs both officially recognised through MoUs and others who are developing structures around which to build their community. VT projects have been responsible for implementing in discrete phases a range of new technological solutions for users and partners. The non-operational NILs have already in a relative short space of time, proved the importance of co-ordination in this area. The UCB meetings continue to be a valuable forum for those communities that wish to feed new requirements into the evolution process and also who wish to discuss aspects of the community support process in a public arena. The benefits all of these shared initiatives are that such discussions can acquire further momentum as a result of the sharing of needs and solutions.

Printable Summary

The second of three sessions on the theme of Community and Co-ordination, this session focuses on experience in community building and user championing and covers VRCs, NGIs, ESFRI projects and other initiatives. Within EGI-INSPIRE this activity primarily falls under the Community Engagement work package and in particular the tasks Community Outreach and Technical Outreach to New Communities (TONC). In addition to these activities the function and operation of the User Community Board (UCB) will also be presented. Many of the user community representatives within the UCB are from recognised Virtual Research

Communities but not all. In addition to the structure of the Forums, Technical and Community, two new entities have being created during the second year of EGI-INSPIRE - namely NILs and VTs. NIL stands for NGI International Liaisons and VT for Virtual Teams. NILs are responsible for non-operational matters and may participate in Virtual Teams (VTs) to achieve short time-frame goals.

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Session Classification: Experience in community building

Track Classification: Community and Co-ordination (Sergio Andreozzi: track leader)