

Project Administration Committee

Meeting 1. 15th September 2010, 14:00 – 15:30, EGI Technical Forum.

Present:

NGIs:

SWITCH, Switzerland. Andres Aeschlimann
CESNET, Czech Republic. Jana Hrdličková
KIT, Germany. Wilhelm Buehler
CSIC, Spain. Isabel Campos Plasencia
GRNET, Greece. Anna Loukakou
MTAKFKI, Hungary. Csaba Hajdu
INFN, Italy. Laura Perini representing Giorio Maggi
RENAM, Moldova. Alexei Altuhov
UKIM, former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. Boro Jakimovski
NCF, Netherlands. Rossend Llurba
LIP, Portugal. Jorge Gomes
IPB, Serbia. Antun Balaz
ARNES, Slovenia. Marko Bonac
UISAV, Slovakia. Miroslav Dobrucky
STFC, UK. Claire Devereux
IMCS-UL, Latvia. Baiba Kaskina
E-ARENA, Russian Federation. Alexander Kryukov
ASGC, Taiwan. Vicky Huang, Stella Sheu

EGI:

Celine Bitoune, Catherine Gater, Rob van der Meer

Chair: Claire Devereux. Minutes: Claire Devereux, Catherine Gater

Agenda

1. Elect a chair at PAC meeting
2. Form the Group of partner and nominate a representative
3. EGI-InSPIRE Finance:
 - Payment process and timeline
 - Audit certificates rules
4. Questions & Answers

Minutes

Chairperson

Claire Devereux (UK) was nominated to chair the PAC. Claire chaired the AFC (equivalent committee) during EGEE III and was happy to accept the nomination to chair the PAC. There were no other nominations and the PAC accepted Claire as chair.

Groupings (Claire)

All NGIs are free to attend the quarterly PAC meetings. To reduce meeting overheads for the NGIs it was suggested that as a minimum the NGIs should organise themselves into groups based on the PMB groups. Within each group there should be a main representative and a deputy, one of which should be responsible for attending each meeting. The groupings would be free to disseminate the information coming out of the PAC to their NGIs and the members of each NGI as best fitted their needs. All written correspondence from the PAC would be circulated to the whole EGI finance mail list.

All agreed with this suggestion.

Action on Celine/Claire to request for nominations for a representative and deputy per PMB grouping.

Suggestion of groupings accepted with all NGIs free to attend meetings if they wish.

Finance: Payment process and timelines (Celine)

PPT and reporting:

Celine stressed the importance of accurate and timely use of the PPT tool. In EGI Inspire there is no other way of tracking payments or effort expenditure.

Each partner has a PPT supervisor who can validate timesheets and also fill in timesheets of staff unavailable at month end (e.g. holidays, sickness). If your staff are not to be involved for a known period then just report 0 into his timesheet; it will save time and emails! Any problems and people can still ask for help from Celine.

All new member requests must go to project office <egi-inspire-po@egi.eu>. However the WP leaders must validate requests for new members beforehand in order to check there is effort for partner in the efforts tables of the CA.

How your PMs are linked to your funding:

For the record, EGI-InSPIRE financial contribution is not calculated on the basis of a provisional budget of estimated costs, but on the efforts committed in the DoW. **Thus the reimbursement of funding can only be made on the basis of the efforts reported (and validated) in PPT.**

There are three parties funding EGI Inspire: EC, NGIs, EGIs. Thus there are tasks corresponding to each, the E tasks (also called global tasks), N tasks, and General tasks. It is very important that staff are correctly registered to the correct task. Effort tables are available in the CA and on the WIKI.

The effort reported is linked to the personnel average costs used at the budget preparation stage and based on this full costs, the rate of the tasks is applied to calculate the available funding for a partner over the reporting period.

Different tasks have different reimbursement rates according to the contribution made by each parties (EC, NGIs, EGI); this scheme was adopted during the preparation of the proposal (see also Table 10 of the DoW).

Every PM reported into PPT is understood to be 100% funded but by different sources; e.g. a resource in the SA1 activity under the task TSA1.8E Providing a Reliable Grid Infrastructure will be funded 25% by the EC, 25% by EGI.eu and 50% by the NGI; tasks within the SA3 activities will be funded 40% by the EC and 60% by the NGI.

It is unlikely that you have to record unfunded effort; this could happen for example if people work directly for the project but are being paid by other source, neither EC EGI or NGI.

Reimbursement of travel costs:

How can travel costs be reported/claimed?

A travel is included as a component of the average PM costs used in the proposal. Therefore the funding of travel is based on a lump sum added on the top of every PM worked; although you will be required to report the actual costs of your travel and staff in the annual cost statement, as they are recorded in your accountant books. But the funding of these costs, both PM and travels, will be paid according to the funding calculation based on the PM reported into PPT.

Average PM is not permitted in your costs statement and for audits; only the real costs can be charged to the EC. **However the funding generated by PPT (based on average PM cost + travel lump sum) will be used to feed the cell 'Funding requested' of your cost statements.**

Bear in mind that although your real costs might have increased since the budget preparation, the funding allocated is fixed and could not vary during the entire project duration.

Q1 report:

There is a draft report available that details person months (PMs) committed, PMs spent, and funding, Celine will circulate it. She asked all to check for mistakes and to forward corrections quickly before it is submitted to EC. Once it is submitted to EC there can be no further modification. All NGIs must respect the deadlines.

The next Quarterly Report, the Q2 reports covering Aug-Oct, will be due mid-November. All future deadlines will be detailed on the wiki. Any delay in the closure of a quarterly report, e.g. late declaration of efforts, will postpone the release of payment accordingly.

Payments:

Upon EC specific requirements, the first pre-financing is based on 6 months of 1st year. A complimentary payment based on Q1 report (effort from timesheets) will be sent out with this pre-financing payment.

Q2 report has a mid- November deadline. Thus subsequent payment could be released around the end of November. The timesheet deadline is the 15th of each month following (i.e. 15th November for October timesheets). The patterns expected in Q3 should be the same as in Q2, and for the rest of the year.

But please bear in mind that the Quarterly reports will be agreed by Work-package leaders (WP)/Activity leaders (AL). And deviations from the project plan (and a linear spend) must be explained before payments will proceed. Actually spending and effort have to be justified to the commission.

Subsequent payments will be processed after the first annual review. The review may take 4-6 months. More information will be given towards the end of the first year.

The process for payments has been validated by PMB.

Contractual documents:

The issue of the Grant Agreement (GA) had been delayed for 2 months because of lot of back and forth between EGI and the NGIs regarding JRU clarification. We have lost the Austrian JRU, and within some JRUs lost some partners that could not agree on conditions in EGI Inspire. Now the GA has been signed by EC and the partners, and the CA too, therefore we expect the release of the pre-financing soon.

Audit certificates.

The threshold above which JRUs have to provide an audit certificate of costs is €375,000. This applies to the costs of the entire JRU as in EGEE. Once a JRU's costs exceed the threshold all members of the JRU have to be audited. Celine is working with EC to clarify this rule because it places a large burden of JRU members that receive little contribution. It may be possible to delay claiming during one year and adding an amendment in a subsequent year.

Once the JRU threshold is reached all members need to be audited. In every subsequent year the audit must be completed if the JRU claims since the last audit exceed the €375,000 threshold. Audit rules only apply to the Form C end of project year claims, not to internal estimations based on quarterly reports.

ACTION on ALL: Please check the costs of the audit per member of your JRU and report to Celine.

Online resources

Celine has prepared a number of resources to help the PAC. These are linked through the Wiki page:

https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Project_Administration_Committee

In future all materials will be available through here or linked through here.

Celine has prepared a lighter-weight guide to FP7 projects for EGI Inspire. The full FP7 guide is 300+ pages long.

Q&A

Catherine Gater kindly took additional notes from the Q&A session. These are available on the Wiki.

Action round up:

Number	Owner	Action
1.1	Celine/Claire	Request nominations for a representative and deputy per PMB grouping
1.2	All PAC reps	Report costs of audit certificates for JRU members to Celine