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# Introduction to the Virtual Team Project framework

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## Description of the Work

The skills needed for EGI to successfully engage as a community with new users exist in many different organisations within EGI-InSPIRE and in the broader EGI ecosystem. To efficiently utilise the skills the EGI-InSPIRE project established its restructured community outreach activity on two pillars:

1. Virtual Team framework that enables NGI and EGI.eu persons to initiate and participate in short living projects (Virtual Team projects) that focus on well defined, non-operational activities around the production infrastructure.
2. NGI International Liaisons who are responsible within the NGIs for the delivery and interaction of non-operational tasks.

The VT framework was setup in November and at the time of writing 14 NGIs already have NILs and seven VTs run with the following mission:

- Define a process by which communication between NGIs and user communities could be recorded to build up a European wide picture of activity and prospects.
- Produce an active and relevant structured contact list of ESFRI projects across EGI partner countries and define a clear and practical process that NGIs can follow to maintain the ESFRI data.
- Improve the uptake and satisfaction of MPI among user communities by demonstrating successful usage practices; bringing sites dedicated to MPI jobs into a VO; improving the communication between MPI support teams and user communities.
- Assess the readiness of the NGIs in adopting some type of federated identity provision mechanism for accessing services.
- Update the EGI website with a new structure and new content in order to make it more attractive and informative for user communities.
- Define an action plan for EGI resource and services providers to make inter-NGI resource usage measurable.
- Define a structure for an “EGI Compendium” that would store information about EGI and identify tools and processes by which the compendium can be maintained.

## Conclusions

The successful integration of non-operational teams within EGI.eu and the NGIs is essential in providing an integrated approach to new communities at both a national and a European level. The new NGI International Liaison role with the Virtual Teams framework empowers EGI to be successful in this area. NILs and VTs provide a foundation for developing a strategic plan in conjunction with the NGIs and then the execution of the plan with the NGIs. The role of NGI International Liaison is new to the non-operational activities in EGI,

but replicates a similar model that has been proven to be successful in the EGI operations community. The recent restructuring of the community outreach function of EGI recognises the complexity and diversity of each NGIs yet the need for these NGIs to be involved in pan-European, coordinated, non-technical activities of EGI. The first set of Virtual Teams has been recently setup and are expected to deliver their first results before the Community Forum.

## Impact

Virtual Teams provide a flexible and dynamic means to rapidly bring together certain members of the community for a well defined series of tasks to meet a specific goal that needs to be achieved in a relatively short period of time before being disbanded (on the order of weeks or months). It is foreseen that different members of EGI want to participate in different types of targeted activities that directly or indirectly relate to engagement with new users. The Virtual Team framework makes this dynamic, focussed engagement possible. Besides flexibility the framework also provides openness and transparency:

- Any NGI can participate in any of the existing Virtual Teams
- Any NGI can propose new Virtual Teams
- The work of all the Virtual Teams are publicly visible through the EGI wiki

The focus of Virtual Teams is to either directly increase the number of EGI users (e.g. through integrating a new application) or indirectly (e.g. by raising the profile of EGI and an NGI through a NGI hosted event for its users). At the time of writing seven Virtual Teams are already running. These are expected to deliver the first results within the next couple of months. The progress of the teams is reviewed on a weekly basis through the NA2 reporting structure. The status of the projects and of the VT-NIL framework itself will be publicly reviewed at the forthcoming NIL meetings planned for January and March.

## URL

[https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Virtual\\_Team\\_Projects](https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Virtual_Team_Projects)

## Overview (For the conference guide)

In 2011 the EGI-InSPIRE project revised its user engagement activities and defined a new structure for the NA2 work package within an updated Description of Work. The purpose of the restructuring is to improve the efficiency and flexibility of the interaction between the NGIs, EGI.eu and other organisations to achieve common goals in the field of “Engaging with New User Communities”. The new user community engagement activity consists of two key elements: Virtual Teams and NGI International Liaisons. Virtual Teams (VTs) bring together individuals from NGIs and EGI.eu to carry out focussed, short term activities that directly or indirectly relate to engagement with new users. NGI International Liaisons (NILs) are the interfaces within the NGIs who integrate national resources into multi-national outreach activities. The talk provides an overview of the VT-NIL outreach model and presents the outcome obtained and lessons learnt from the first set of Virtual Teams.

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