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Championing e-infrastructure

Tuesday, 27 March 2012 14:00 (20 minutes)

Impact

Both of these initiatives are still at an early stage. The presentation at the Community Forum will focus on the setting up of these initiatives and their progress so far.

Impact will be assessed in several ways
- examining how the Campus and Community Champions have linked with other e-infrastructure advocate networks in order to increase the awareness of all.
- raising awareness and training the next generation of researchers by holding e-infrastructure training events
- encouraging new communities to take up e-infrastructure by removing the barriers, both technical and received.

The presentation will report back on these impact measurements and how the champions network will build on these successes.

URL

http://www.ngs.ac.uk/campus-champions
http://www.ngs.ac.uk/seiuccr/meetthechampions

Overview (For the conference guide)

The UK National Grid Service (NGS) has two Champion networks - Campus and Community who each reach out to a different area of the existing and potential user community in the UK. Campus champions promote e-infrastructure within their own institution to all researchers. Community champions are representatives from distinct research communities who promote e-infrastructure to their peers and fellow researchers.

This presentation will describe the structure of these two groups, their methods of dissemination, the support provided to them by the NGS and the impact they have had in promoting e-infrastructure.

Description of the Work

There are currently 16 NGS Campus Champions based at 15 UK institutions. Institutions can nominate more than 1 Campus Champion for example, one from IT Services and another from their research community. The majority of Campus Champions are based in IT or Research Computing Services.

The Campus Champions act as conduits of information between institutions and the NGS informing one another of opportunities for engagement and collaboration. The Campus Champions actively promote the NGS within their institution through offering advice and guidance to researchers, giving presentations and representing the NGS at local IT events.

The NGS offers Campus Champions training in NGS usage, grid resources, cloud, providing certificates and any other appropriate areas. This enables knowledge building within the Campus Champions allowing them to become a source of expertise in grid and e-infrastructure in their institution.

There are presently 7 Community Champions who are funded through the SeIUCCR (Supporting e-Infrastructure Uptake through Community Champions for Research) project. This project is funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) for 2 years.

The Community Champions each represent a research area of interest to the EPSRC. These areas are:
• Computer Science
• Computational Biophysics
• Physics
• Bio medical
• Engineering
• Chemistry
• Energy

The Community Champions disseminate opportunities for the use of e-infrastructure to their communities bridging the gap between academic researchers and the e-infrastructure providers. The champions are funded to attend project networking events, training workshops and major conferences in their field to demonstrate their usage of e-infrastructure. The Community Champions are also points of contact at their institutions and they are able to act as information facilitators between the institution and their research community and the NGS.

Conclusions

The Champions networks demonstrates the willingness of IT staff and researchers to promote and discuss e-infrastructure within their individual communities. They demonstrate the enthusiasm with which e-infrastructure is used and the success stories generated. The collaboration between different advocate networks can only enhance and further promote the usage of e-infrastructure to the wider community and to pockets of researchers who are as yet to try the technology.

Primary author: Dr SINCLAIR, Gillian (MANCHESTER)

Co-author: Dr DEVEREUX, Claire (STFC RAL)

Presenter: Dr SINCLAIR, Gillian (MANCHESTER)

Session Classification: Communication: the key to future funding

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