

TECHNICAL REVIEW REPORT

e-Infrastructures

Project acronym: e-ScienceTalk
Project title: e-ScienceTalk : Supporting Grid and High Performance Computing reporting across Europe
Grant agreement number: 260733
Funding scheme: CSA-SA
Project starting date: 01/09/2010
Project duration: 33 months
Coordinator: Catherine Gater, EGI.eu
Project web site: <http://www.e-sciencetalk.org/>

Period covered by the report: Period No. 1, from [01/09/2010] to [31/08/2011]
Place of review meeting: DG INFSO - Brussels
Date of review meeting: 8 November 2011

Experts: Barbara Aronson
 Juliane Jarke
 Luc Smeesters

Project officer: Ms Carmela ASERO

Individual report
 Consolidated report



1. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

a. Executive summary

Please give your overall assessment of the project, commenting on the following:

- *main scientific/technological achievements of the project*
- *quality of the results*
- *attainment of the objectives and milestones for the period*
- *adherence to the workplan, any deviations (whether justified) and remedies (whether acceptable)*
- *take-up of the recommendations from the previous review (if applicable)*
- *contribution to the state of the art*
- *use of resources*
- *impact*

The project has made excellent progress in the reported period. The reviewers consider the results to date to be of very high quality, in terms of the project's publications and products and also the other deliverables. The project consortium works well as a team and has demonstrated good internal collaboration and interaction throughout the review presentations as well as through the coherence in quality and content of the project's products and deliverables.

The project has taken up recommendations from previous reviews of the predecessor project GridTalk and incorporated them thoughtfully into eScienceTalk. This includes for example the development and constant refinement of success and impact metrics and the thorough evaluation of copyright options for e-ScienceTalk publications and content.

The reviewers believe that the consortium pays commendable attention to its target audiences and users by soliciting feedback through e.g. surveys and face-to-face interaction. This feedback constitutes a basis for the project team's decisions regarding content provision and future development of eScienceTalk products.

b. Recommendations concerning the period under review

Please give your recommendations on the acceptance or rejection of resources, work done and required corrective actions – e.g., resubmission of reports or deliverables, further justifications, etc.

All deliverables are accepted. The reviewers commend the consortium for the high quality and professionalism of the writing in both the information products and the administrative documents.

c. Recommendations concerning future work

Please give your recommendations – e.g., overall modifications, corrective actions at WP level, re-tuning of the objectives to optimise the impact or to keep up with the state of the art, better use of resources, re-focusing, etc. Where appropriate, indicate the timescale for implementation.

As already outlined in the deliverable D1.3 (Annual impact and sustainability report), D3.4 (Report on survey of iSGTW readers) and D4.3 (Annual report on feedback and metrics) further refinement of the project metrics is required and foreseen. For example D1.4, the update to D1.3, will include a definition of what constitutes impact, as well as more detail regarding the outcomes and outputs of the specific eScienceTalk products. Further recommendations for the refinement of metrics regarding the cross fertilization amongst the eScienceTalk products need to be examined (e.g. through Web statistics concerning the traffic leading within the

eScienceTalk product sphere); and the reporting of metrics based on events (e.g. number of downloads, visits after GridCasts, after the distribution of eScienceBriefings).

The reviewers believe that the project team's suggestions concerning the future sustainability of its products are sensible and will support eventual decisions. The reviewers further suggest that the consortium explores a possible future role in providing a dissemination platform and services for e.g. eInfrastructure and other EU-funded projects. This approach could provide long-term sustainability for eScienceTalk products while assuring a useful and needed service.

d. Assessment

- Excellent progress (the project has fully achieved its objectives and technical goals for the period and has even exceeded expectations).
- Good progress (the project has achieved most of its objectives and technical goals for the period with relatively minor deviations).
- Acceptable progress (the project has achieved some of its objectives; however, corrective action will be required).
- Unsatisfactory progress (the project has failed to achieve key objectives and/or is not at all on schedule).

2. OBJECTIVES and WORKPLAN

a. Progress towards project objectives

Assess to what extent the objectives of the project for the period have been achieved. In particular, please indicate if the project as a whole has been making satisfactory progress in relation to the Description of Work (Annex I to the grant agreement) and comment on the interaction between the work packages and the level of integration demonstrated.

The objectives of the project during the reporting period of the review have been fully met.

The project has successfully built on the achievements of the GridTalk project. It has widened the thematic scope of several products and the overall project (e.g iSGTW, eScienceBriefings, eScienceCity), which has been well received by the targeted audiences. The Real Time Monitor adds an exciting and interesting feature to the product catalogue.

eScienceTalk has demonstrated close collaboration and interaction with other eInfrastructure projects in terms of featuring European projects in the eScienceTalk publications and also through joint conference attendances. One e-concertation meeting has been organised.

The sustainability of eScienceTalk products remains to be elaborated in more detail, but a plan on how to proceed further in project year 2 is in place.

b. Progress in individual work packages

For each work package (WP), assess the progress in relation to the Description of Work (Annex I of the grant agreement). Please also report and comment on any delays, reasons for them and any remedial action taken. Specify the work packages concerned.

WP1 has delivered the eScienceBriefings in an appealing and interesting manner. The plans presented on how to proceed with the investigation concerning sustainability for each of the eScienceTalk products was well received.

WP2 has implemented new and exciting ways of presenting and demonstrating the world of grid computing. The number of sites added to the GridGuide has been below expectations, especially regarding North America. The project team will pro-actively pursue the inclusion of new sites.

WP3 has continued to publish the high-quality newsletter iSGTW. It has widened its scope and has received positive feedback from its readers through the yearly survey. Doubts have been raised by the reviewers and were acknowledged by the WP leader about the effectiveness and usefulness of the newly introduced “community section”. The registration process for users in order to feed blogs etc. does not necessarily have to be associated with a community as such. Because of the low response rate to the survey (1.7%), it will be conducted earlier next year to circumvent holiday times. The reviewers recommend asking participants to give contact details if they are available for a more qualitative follow-up interview. This way specific target audiences (e.g. students) could be examined in more depth.

The planned introduction of an Asian editor was well received by the reviewers.

WP4 has provided effective organisation and management to the project. D4.3 *Annual report on feedback and metrics* will refine and amend the metrics. The ideas outlined in the document were well received by the reviewers

c. Milestones and deliverables

Indicate whether the planned milestones and deliverables have been achieved for the reporting period (please give more detailed comments first and then fill in the summary table below).

All planned milestones were achieved and planned deliverables were produced.

STATUS OF DELIVERABLES			
No.	Title	Status (Approved/Rejected)	Remarks
D3.1	Weekly issues of iSGTW	Approved	
D1.2.1	GridBriefings	Approved	
D4.1	Dissemination plan	Approved	
D1.1	Policy engagement strategy	Approved	
D3.2	Relaunch of iSGTW with a new name and new underlying content management system	Approved	
D4.2	Quality assurance guide	Approved	
D1.2.2	GridBriefings	Approved	
D1.2.3	GridBriefings	Approved	
D3.3	Strategic report on iSGTW marketing, social media and commercial exploitation	Approved	
D1.2.4	GridBriefings	Approved	
D1.3	Annual impact and sustainability report on e-ScienceTalk products	Approved	
D2.1	GridGuide updated integration with the RTM	Approved	
D3.4	Report on survey of iSGTW and annual metrics	Approved	
D4.3	Annual report on feedback and metrics	Approved	Deliverable was delayed by 2 weeks in agreement with EC to include metrics for the whole reporting period.

d. Relevance of objectives

Indicate whether the objectives for the coming periods are (i) still relevant and (ii) still achievable within the time and resources available to the project. Assess also whether the approach and methodology continue to be relevant.

The objectives of the coming period are still relevant. The approach and methodology in terms of quality metrics and impact assessment will be amended, which should make the information about users and use even more beneficial to the project.

e. For Networks of Excellence (NoEs) only

Assess how the Joint Programme of Activities has been realised for the period and whether all the planned activities have been satisfactorily completed.

Not applicable.

3. RESOURCES

a. Assessment of the use of resources

Comment on the use of resources, i.e. personnel resources and other major cost items. In particular, indicate whether the resources have been utilised (i) to achieve the progress and (ii) in a manner consistent with the principle of economy, efficiency and effectiveness¹. Note that both aspects (i) and (ii) have to be covered in your answer. The assessment should cover the deployment of resources overall and by each participant. Are the resources used appropriate and necessary for the work performed and commensurate with the results achieved? Are the major cost items appropriate? In your assessment, consider the person months, equipment, subcontracting, consumables and travel.

The resources spent are appropriate and generally according to plan. There has been a slight underspending due to late recruitment of staff by some partners (e.g. dissemination officer at QMUL started work only in M11). There have been some variations in the planned/reported effort for WP2 and WP3 due to the overlap in staff in those two work packages. This will be dealt with in the next reporting period.

b. Deviations

If applicable, please comment on major deviations with respect to the planned resources.

Travel expenses were higher than expected due to late notification of acceptance by conference organizers. The team intends to correct this problem in year 2 by joining conference organising committees or getting reduced rates as journalists.

4. MANAGEMENT, COLLABORATION AND BENEFICIARIES' ROLES

a. Technical, administrative and financial management of the project

Assess the quality and effectiveness of the project management, including the management of individual work packages, the handling of any problems and the implementation of previous review recommendations. Comment also on the quality and completeness of information and documentation.

The project has been managed effectively and well. Each of the work packages has successfully implemented the planned tasks. The quality and completeness of the deliverables is very high.

b. Collaboration and communication

Comment on the quality and effectiveness of the collaboration and communication between the beneficiaries.

The project partners appear to be a well collaborating team with a very positive attitude towards learning. The internal communication seems to be well organised and works smoothly.

c. Beneficiaries' roles

Give an assessment of the role and contribution of each individual beneficiary and indicate if there is any evidence of underperformance, lack of commitment or change of interest.

The skills and competencies of the consortium members are well developed and highly complementary. The efforts, contributions, enthusiasm and commitment of each of the beneficiaries, and their clear focus on the project, are evident in everything eScienceTalk has produced.

5. USE AND DISSEMINATION OF FOREGROUND

a. Impact

Is there evidence that the project has so far had, and is it likely to have, significant scientific, technical, commercial, social or environmental impact (where applicable)?

The project has had considerable impact on policy makers, researchers and the interested public alike. Due to numerous surveys, feedback talks, quality metrics and Web analytics the project team constantly refines its outreach products and contents in order to maximise their impact. This is being done very successfully.

b. Use of results

Comment on whether the plan for the use of foreground, including any updates, is still appropriate. Comment also on the plan for the exploitation and use of foreground for the consortium as a whole, or for individual beneficiaries or groups of beneficiaries, and its progress to date.

A concrete plan in terms of sustainability for the different eScienceTalk products will be delivered in project year 2 however the consortium has presented initial thoughts about making some of the content of its products available via a Web-based archive after the projects termination.

c. Dissemination

Assess whether the dissemination of project results and information (via the project website, publications, conferences, etc.) has been adequate and appropriate.

This is the main goal of the project. ISGTW reader surveys indicate that student readership could be increased.

d. Involvement of potential users and stakeholders

Indicate whether potential users and other stakeholders (outside the consortium) are suitably involved (if applicable).

The project has involved stakeholders such as policy makers, researchers, students and the general public through its various dissemination channels.

e. Links with other projects and programmes

Comment on the consortium's interaction with other related Framework Programme projects and other national/international R&D programmes and standardisation bodies (if relevant).

There is very good interaction and cross-fertilisation between eScienceTalk and other eInfrastructure projects through, for example, joint conferences or the reporting of projects in the eScienceBriefings or the iSGTW. eScience Talk has signed 9 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) in the reporting period with the following EU-funded projects:

- Policy: e-IRGSP2/3
- Collaborations outside Europe: EUIndiaGrid2, LinkSCEEM2, CHAIN
- User community & infrastructures: WeNMR, EMI, EGI-InSPIRE, DEGISCO, GISELA

For the next reporting period a further MoUs are planned with for example ESFRI, EUDAT, ENVRI, BioMedBridges, SAGrid, REUNA.

6. OTHER ISSUES

If applicable, comment on whether other relevant issues (e.g. ethical issues, policy/regulatory issues, safety issues) have been handled appropriately.

Name(s) of expert(s): Juliane Jarke

Date:

Signature(s):

Name(s) of expert(s): Barbara Aronson

Date:

Signature(s):

Name(s) of expert(s): Luc Smeesters

Date:

Signature(s):