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Date: 04-11-2004

Meeting Object: EGEE-2 taskforce kick-off telecon

Editor(s): F. Gagliardi, A. Cook

Meeting Date: 04/11/04

Meeting Place: CERN, 600-R017 and phone conference

Attendees: Fabrizio Gagliardi (Project Director and meeting chair)

Anna Cook (Project Secretary)

Kristina Gunne (Administrative assistant)

Fotis Karayannis Dieter Kranzlmueller Christian Saguez

Neil Geddes Olof Barring Giorgio Maggi

Distribution: EGEE-2 Taskforce members



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AGENDA:

- 1. Introduction to the EGEE 2 Task Force, composition and agreement of the terms of reference
- 2. Timelines for the proposal submission
- 3. Main focus of the next phase of the project (production and deployment, new application support, industry)
- 4. Support of future international Grid schools
- 5. Extension to other countries (EU and not EU) and submission to other intermediate EU calls
- 6. AoB and calendar of future meetings



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1. Introduction to the EGEE 2 Task Force, composition and agreement of the terms of reference

Gagliardi requested any modification to the agenda items or AoB. Geddes requested to discuss what we learned from the Commission in the last six months (concertation meetings, etc.) and what they expect from us. Gagliardi suggested a round-table information gathering exercise as point 0.

Point 0:

Gagliardi is getting positive noise from various sources to go ahead with phase 2. He received a formal memo from the four LHC spokespersons encouraging EGEE to go ahead and do what is necessary to get to phase 2.

Action 1 Gagliardi: Circulate the memorandum from the LHC spokespersons.

In a meeting with the CERN DG, Gagliardi was similarly encouraged and given full political support. An important point was that EGEE must make sure that some other major scientific application (non-HEP) is included for the second phase and must be demonstrated in phase 1. He insisted on the fact that either we remain the largest infrastructure project with a lot of support from member states, or we go for a smaller more-limited scope project, but in this case the DG thought it would be harder to maintain the level of funding.

Gagliardi had long discussions with the unit led by Mario Campolargo and Luis Rosello in June, but they were very much inclined to "wait and see" what EGEE demonstrates at the review in February.

The CERN IT division leader Wolfgang von Rueden went to Brussels last week and had positive feedback. In theory we could be more aggressive. For the first phase, 32M was obtained in a strong competition environment.

55 M will be available for the second phase. Demonstrating that EGEE is THE infrastructure makes it less likely that we face more competition. We are in a favourable position to be the leader in Grid infrastructure, and we show 18-24 months advance on US colleagues and the rest of the world. It would be shameful to be slowed down by competition in different units in the EU:

F2 Middleware

F3 infrastructure

EGEE collaborates with the biomed field which is a very positive and collaborative environment. The two most interesting activities in F2 are CoreGrid (NoE, computer science-oriented which is complementary to EGEE, led by Thierry Priol who is on EAC) and NextGrid (led by David Snelling who is on our EAC). We should try to connect well to these projects. Our EAC members are very advantageous to have on board.

Succeeding in February means:

- continuing and maintaining our infrastructure (SA1). This is seen worldwide as good and positive.
- Non-HEP applications up and running. This is less obvious but good work is being done. However, Gagliardi is not sure how many real biologists are using the infrastructure. The development is good from people supporting this user-community. Gagliardi still hasn't seen much of real applications. There are other applications through EGAAP and NA4 brought on (Chemistry, astrophysics, etc.), but this must be pursued actively with the NA4 activity.
- Convergence of the middleware. gLite and related activities, good work done in federations but not necessarily coordinated by JRA1. Conflict is potentially a problem



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within this activity, coherence and vision must be established. In the PEBs and technical meetings, they have a major challenge to bring this issue together in time for the review.

The floor was opened for reactions: Saguez mentioned the important IST conference in which a round table on Grids will be held. Gagliardi will attend and regards it as a good but unpredictable occasion as there are so many parallel agenda. It will be a good networking opportunity. EGEE counts on the Industry Forum and EGAAP to bring in new applications.

Saguez: a representative from Novartis will be attending in Den Haag. A good application in geophysics and a new community for microphysics and materials is likely, the IF is talking to Motorola on this. Gagliardi underlined that action is necessary, however potential is not sufficient

Geddes felt very little feedback had been received from the EU. The UK sees this warfare between F2 and F3. For the users, the difficulty is that those communities are not as pan-European as HEP. The middleware deployment is slowing us down, and as the second generation of EGEE middleware is going to be available in the future, this is prompting people to want to wait for it, therefore creating a transition phase which complicates things. These are important points to be borne in mind. Gagliardi suggested revisiting the issue that was explored beginning of EDG, to see what can be done with other organizations such as EMBL.

Action 2 Geddes: Follow up the connection with EMBL.

Saguez agreed to help with EMBL as he has contacts there as well.

Ynnerman raised the experience drawn in terms of trying to make genuine purpose resources available on an international production Grid. This is an issue with LCG as well. There is a lack of a mechanism to do the resource allocation. The creation of truly international VOs will give added value to the project.

Gagliardi mentioned our experience from building the first phase: Jones had summarized the results and what are seen as major issues in a note circulated before the meeting (Input for EGEE-2), an analysis of what has been done and what improvements can be made.

The production needs to be improved. In general, for the next phase the balance of the project and the focus should be changed. This would be discussed further under agenda item 3.

In a national environment, things are made easier. On an international level, things are more complex. Smaller partners in terms of funding (CE, SE federations) have confirmed their strong support but they are facing a situation where they are actively working in F2 as they can develop their competences better there rather than in EGEE. They would like to see their skills and contribution better acknowledged for the second phase of EGEE.

Ulf Dahlsten, new director in the EU replacing Luis Rosello, will be present at our conference. He is very keen in doing something with China. Good contact is already established via SA1. Taiwan are becoming an official member of EGEE and are contributing, Geddes is hosting the Chinese at RAL during a meeting, so the relations are being built.

Karayannis mentioned that the third update of the research infrastructures Call has been circulated. The extraordinary Call will be launched in December.

Action 3 Gagliardi: Circulate the details of the extraordinary call to the TF members.



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Official complaints from the member states have been made to the EU that there is too much advance information is being circulated by the EU.

The meeting continued with discussion of agenda item 1:

The EGEE taskforce's purpose is obvious and its composition is clear.

Barring asked for a presentation of the taskforce.

Anders Ynnerman: head of Metacentre in Sweden, resource allocation. Chosen as he represents the Nordic federation and brings experience of running high performance computing applications.

Fotis Karayannis: chosen to represent good link to research network community, represents SE federation and strong connections with other initiatives like SEEGRID.

Giorgio Maggi: Bari polytechnic. Works in CMS, data analysis using the Grid. Major contributor to the administrative aspects of phase 1. Will help making the federations stronger.

Christian Saguez: Ecole centrale in Paris, industrial applications for Grid, manages the Industry Forum. Chosen for bringing strong connections to industry.

Dieter Kranzlmueller: University of Linz, CE federation representative; eIRG representative for Austria. Complement of computer science community in CE, very important and under-represented in current phase.

Neil Geddes: RAL, UK. Director of UK Grid operations support centre. Rutherford e-Science Centre. Represents the UK, and has connections with OMII, of which he is steering committee member. Neil sits on various boards in the UK to ensure overlap and interaction in all initiatives.

Olof Barring: CERN, involved in DataGrid, in which he was WP4 Fabric management leader. Now works on mass storage software; leads CASTOR project which is critical for the current phase of EGEE.

Fabrizio Gagliardi, incumbent leader of EGEE, might be candidate for the second term. Here to bring experience in running phase 1.

All these people bring a diversity of experience to ensure a fruitful preparation of phase 2.

Terms of reference:

- To draw from the experience of phase 1 to ascertain what to do differently in phase 2
- Determine the focus intended for phase 2
- Prepare a rough programme of work with a rough estimate of required resources, and prepare a financial envelope
- Report regularly to PMB

A face to face meeting is scheduled in Den Haag: a lunch is organized for the 24th November at NCC.



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2. Timelines for proposal submission

Gagliardi expects the last call for Grids to come out in May 2005 and to close in September 2005.

The availability of the TF needs to be protected given the problems entailed by having to prepare this over the summer. The writing of the proposal will be difficult to start before then. Gagliardi suggests we take the original proposal as template.

From mid-May to end-June, ensure all TF members are available to dedicate time to do the work. Everything will be in electronic format this time and this has disadvantages. Everything will require careful planning, and intend to be ready a week before the submission date. Karayannis noted the advantage of being able to submit several copies.

Geddes asked about which signatures will be required, as the summer period makes it difficult to find the people. Gagliardi stated that the signature of the coordinator is the one which is required at the outset and if CERN is re-appointed coordinator, he will ensure this is organized. FP7 is probably good to keep in mind as it will be useful as any further extension of EGEE would come under this context. Work is already underway by various people to ensure Grids are included in the programme.

Karayannis: there is a Commission document on future of Europe research policy. One issue raised is that they are considering using new tools other than I3. This should be followed up.



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3. Main focus of the next phase of the project (production and deployment, new application support, industry)

There are a number of issues we need to think about in the next few weeks: Production and deployment, new application support, role of industry. Through LCG we get access to HP resources and IBM has visited EGEE. Companies are interested to help production deployment.

Barring asked whether we should define a strategy on how to tackle the middleware issue, or whether we should focus on the problems we have and evolve from these.

Gagliardi answered that middleware is the essence of the Grid. Middleware is being developed everywhere in the world and this renders the issue problematic. Within EGEE the situation is also unclear: the JRA1 activity should coordinate and integrate all input but there are problems with this. All these points need to be understood in order to move ahead.

If we demonstrate good applications on a solid infrastructure, this is good grounding for a second phase. VO management and data management are still very basic, and we run the risk of being too focused on particle physics.

We are struggling with technological, sociological and political issues.

A long discussion followed on the issue of missing functionality.

The next phase should be much more realistic on all levels. We should avoid starting from scratch again. Geddes said we should get the Commission on board with what we want to do.

More time should be spent by all federations interacting with member state representatives.



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4. Support of future international Grid schools

A subset of EGEE made a request to F2, generic support for middleware, to get the Grid school supported. The proposal was found too expensive and rejected. Brussels encouraged resubmission.

5. Extension to other countries (EU and not EU) and submission to other intermediate EU calls

There are four areas where EGEE must be extended:

- The Baltic countries are a top priority as they are complaining they are not part of EGEE. Gagliardi does not want CERN to lead these proposals for various reasons, but CERN will provide help. A training event was held in the Baltic countries in October which was very successful.
- Latin America is another proposal under evaluation. Value must be added to the research network extension. CERN plays a role of support and coordination.
- Asia: the UK might consider taking some kind of leadership in this relationship. The composition of the Consortium is still unclear.
- Mediterranean areas.

Calls open mid-December.

Ynnerman says the Baltic extension is moving along very well. It is not regarded as a competing initiative. A workshop was held in Lithuania, attended by many people. SNIC was designated as coordinator of 'BEEGEE": Baltic Extension of EGEE.

Karayannis: The coordination of the proposal is under discussion for the Mediterranean area. Roberto Barbera will be involved, and a meeting will be held in December.

6. AoB and calendar of future meetings

Next face to face meeting over lunch on November 24th at the EGEE conference.

A conference call meeting after the extraordinary call has opened should be held in January.

Then a further meeting after the review, in February, and a face to face meeting in Athens during the third conference.

Suggestions for the calendar will be sent out to all members for the meeting in den Haag.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.15pm.



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7. New action summary

No.	Owner	Description	Status
1	Gagliardi	Circulate the memorandum from the LHC spokespersons	
2	Geddes	Follow up the connection with EMBL	
3	Gagliardi	Circulate the details of the extraordinary call to the TF members	

Next meeting: November 24th 12:30-14:00, Den Haag