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eResearch2020: Roadmap of strategies supporting e-Infrastructure policies

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Abstract

In this talk, we present selected results of a systematic study of different types of e-Research infrastructures. The results presented here are based on ongoing research (<http://www.eresearch2020.eu/>) to compare a range of e-Infrastructures of broad diversity focusing on: geographical diversity, representing efforts from around the globe; disciplinary diversity, including the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities; organizational diversity, for example, multi-institutional or federated; diverse levels of maturity, from those in the planning stage to those with a well-established user base; and diverse types of target user communities such as specialized niche, discipline-wide, or generic infrastructures. We will discuss some general features that distinguish between different types of infrastructures across different fields of research.

Previous analyses of e-Infrastructures have focused on the parallels between these infrastructures and the major infrastructures in society that support national populations. What our cases highlight instead is that e-Infrastructures consist of multiple types of overlapping and intersecting socio-technical configurations that serve quite diverse needs and groups of users. Indeed, the very term 'infrastructures' may be misleading insofar as it connotes support of whole communities of researchers on a large scale, which is currently still premature. The research derives implications of this heterogeneity for the future outlook on e-Infrastructures in the form of a roadmap.

Presenter: SCHROEDER, Ralph (Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford)

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