

Grid and Astrophysical Research: current activities and future perspectives

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The interest of the astronomical community for the Grid technology dates back early 2000s when various initiatives were undertaken in several countries to set up national Grid infrastructures.

In the meanwhile some European projects were funded by the European Commission aimed at creating and maintaining a stable European Grid Infrastructure for the benefit of several astronomical communities and in this process the HEP community at CERN played a leading role.

The most important of these projects are certainly the various editions of the EGEE projects where the astronomical community has a presence since 2004 when the first two astronomical applications were approved: the Major Atmospheric Gamma-ray Imaging Cherenkov Telescope and Planck. Ever since the astronomical community is continuously growing in terms of applications, tools and services aimed at making smoother the gridification of applications and make the Grid more appealing for users. The amount of shared resources within the Virtual Organizations increased as well.

The presentation aims at providing a complete overview of the most relevant activity carried out by the astronomical community in EGEE, especially during the third phase of the project when the astronomical cluster was created as an aggregating body for all interested astronomical groups. This activity will highlight that often the usage of the Grid by astronomers is not traditional and requires non-conventional resources and services to be integrated in Grid infrastructures. Finally the presentation will try to show possible future developments and perspectives with the Grid for the astronomical community now that the EGI era is approaching.

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