

The UK National Grid Service and EGEE

Thursday 10 May 2007 10:00 (25 minutes)

Describe the scientific/technical community and the scientific/technical activity using (planning to use) the EGEE infrastructure. A high-level description is needed (neither a detailed specialist report nor a list of references).

The mission of the UK NGS is to provide coherent electronic access for UK researchers to all computational and data based resources and facilities required to carry out their research, independent of resource or researcher location. This access will be based upon integrated open standards and the NGS will operate the core services required to exploit local, National and International Partner facilities such as EGEE.

Report on the experience (or the proposed activity). It would be very important to mention key services which are essential for the success of your activity on the EGEE infrastructure.

Part of the success depends on providing end user support, documentation and training. The NGS Support Centre is a virtual, distributed centre comprising CCLRC, the White Rose Grid at the University of Leeds, the University of Manchester, the University of Oxford and the National e-Science Centre at the University of Edinburgh. The support centre operates a central helpdesk for the NGS that is closely linked to the UK and Ireland Regional Operations Centre. Through this link the NGS helpdesk is integrated into the European wide support structure co-ordinated by EGEE. Through the National e-Science Centre the NGS leverages training and related materials developed for the EGEE project.

With a forward look to future evolution, discuss the issues you have encountered (or that you expect) in using the EGEE infrastructure. Wherever possible, point out the experience limitations (both in terms of existing services or missing functionality)

Looking ahead the NGS aims to improve interoperability with EGEE. This has proved difficult due to incompatibilities between the NGS and EGEE infrastructure. Combined with tight EGEE timescales this has led to technical choices and software products which are difficult for the NGS to deploy. However, the EGEE and NGS experience is teaching us which aspects are absolutely vital for large scale production grids. From the user perspective differences between NGS and EGEE are gradually reducing.

Describe the added value of the Grid for the scientific/technical activity you (plan to) do on the Grid. This should include the scale of the activity and of the potential user community and the relevance for other scientific or business applications

To date the NGS currently has approximately 500 users and has been successful in attracting users from a wide range of disciplines. Examples of current work include projects in chemistry, engineering, Census data analysis,

archaeology, medical imaging, molecular dynamics, integrated biology and biological processing. Users come from over 25 different institutions, mostly, but not exclusively from the UK. By utilising the grid these communities are enabled to co-operate in international collaborations across wide area infrastructure such as EGEE with a reducing amount of effort and the option to access resources that were previously unavailable to their community.

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Session Classification: Users in the wider Grid community - from science to business

Track Classification: Related Projects