EGEE Newsletter
September 2005

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Welcome

Welcome to this September issue of the EGEE newsletter, unusually late because of the preparation and submission of the EGEE-II proposal. As always, you can access an online version of this newsletter, as well as all back issues, here.

EGEE News

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Brief News

EGEE-II proposal submitted

After many weeks of tireless work in all areas of the project, the proposal for EGEE-II was submitted to the EU at 13:12 on 8 September. Weighing in at some 321 pages, the proposal lists a consortium of more than 90 partners in 32 countries, notably including more formal links to partners in the US, South Korea and Taipei. The Project Director, Fabrizio Gagliardi, would like to thank all those who helped to write the proposal, both current partners and those who are new to the EGEE family. Feedback from the European Union should be received later on in the year, and will be passed on to the project members as soon as possible.

Negotiation progress for EGEE related projects

Furthering its role as an incubator for Grid technology and research infrastructures, EGEE has supported a large number of related projects to be submitted to the last EU INFSO RI call in March. The negotiation for these projects has progressed over the last few months and they have provided the EU with all necessary material to conclude negotiations and begin to draft the related EU contracts. These should be ready by the end of the year, with most projects due to start early next year. The projects are:

BalticGrid	EUChinaGrid
BELIEF	EUMedGrid
BIOINFOGRID	Health-e-Child
eIRGSP	ICEAGE

EELA	ISSeG
ETICS	

New promotional materials: EGEE video & glossy brochure

The project will soon have two new pieces of promotional material, both well suited for use with non-technical audiences. The EGEE glossy brochure explains the vision of the project, with views from a number of users, shows the breadth of the collaboration and highlights key features such as the gLite middleware. The EGEE video, designed to be screened at high quality at events or streamed over the web, highlights the goals and achievements of EGEE through interviews and computer graphics. Both of these items will be circulated at the Fourth Conference in October.

Collaboration Board questionnaire results show success of EGEE

At the third EGEE conference in Athens, the Collaboration Board carried out a survey to asses the progress of the project. The results were very positive, with 87% considering the overall progress of the project Good or Very Good, and 98% feeling the results of the first review were Good or Very Good. A set of pdf slides on the results of the questionnaire, prepared by Collaboration Board Chair Fotis Karayannis, can be found here.

gLite update: 1.3 in active use, 1.4 in preparation

With gLite 1.4 soon to be released for testing, version 1.3 is already being put to work both within EGEE and by related projects. The GILDA testbed (used for a range of training, dissemination and testing activities) is using this latest public release, and perhaps more crucially, so is the pre-production service. Use on the pre-production service means gLite is now being used by some key customers of the EGEE infrastructure, notably CMS (one of the LHC experiments) and related project DILIGENT (a Digital Library Infrastructure on Grid Enabled Technology).

Through the Pre Production Service, CMS and DILIGENT have access to some of the large batch systems of the main Production Service, all through Computing Elements running gLite 1.3 rather than LCG-2. For CMS, this provides gLite based access to queues reserved for them on the batch systems, as well as access to Production Service Storage Elements containing data from previous jobs submitted using LCG-2. These developments are a another step forward for the gLite team, both in terms of wider deployment and in building up trust in the middleware stack.

DILIGENT have also recently deployed gLite over their development infrastructure, the first time gLite has been deployed on an infrastructure other than those managed by EGEE. This

system comprises around 25 machines, across sites in Austria, Greece, Germany and Italy, with more machines due to be connected in the near future. Initially running gLite 1.1, they have recently switched to 1.3, adopting almost all the foundation Grid services offered by gLite. In the next month, DILIGENT also plans to install gLite on their smaller testing infrastructure. These expansions of the community making use of gLite both demonstrate the value of the stack and provides a larger community to give feedback to the developers and testers, further improving the product.

CIC-on-Duty: spreading the load on infrastructure management

EGEE, along with its sister project LCG, manages the world's largest Grid infrastructure – no easy job when this infrastructure is spread over more than 160 sites in some 27 countries. Just as building such a system requires novel approaches, managing it also requires innovations. When EGEE was first launched, the infrastructure was managed centrally from the Operations Centre at CERN. While this worked quite well, it also had disadvantages. Troubleshooting such a large a network is a tiring job, and the experience it generated was concentrated in one place. To lessen the work load and to make sure experience with Grid operations was more evenly spread out, EGEE came up with a scheme where the Core Infrastructure Centres shared the load. Dubbed CIC-on-duty, this new system began in October 2004.

In this system, responsibility for managing the infrastructure passes around the globe on a weekly basis. At first, responsibility was passed between CERN and the CIC in Lyon. Later the UK and Italian CICs joined the scheme, and more recently the Russian CIC. Soon the project hopes to add CICs in the US and Taipei, giving true 24 hour oversight of the infrastructure. Starting with a simple agreed-upon procedure, the system has developed through discussion and collaboration between the CICs and the CERN Operations Centre. On example of this is the CIC Dashboard, a web based overview of the state of the infrastructure, first suggested by the Lyon CIC and now used by all the centres in their daily work.

Already the CIC-on-duty scheme is proving worthwhile. While it seems that the number of bugs which the CICs have to deal with each day has stayed roughly constant, the number of sites they manage has grown immensely, as has the number of 'good' sites. When the CIC-on-duty scheme began, only around 45% of sites passed their daily Site Functional Tests, but now this figure is closer to 80%. The approach taken in this scheme reflects the collaborative nature of the EGEE project in general, and the successes that such an approach can provide.

Third International Grid School attracts students from Seventeen Countries

Students from all over the world attended the Third International Grid School in Vico Equense, Italy, to extend their knowledge of Grid Computing. Numerous EGEE staff were involved in the planning and delivery of the programme, including Fabrizio Gagliardi, Erwin Laure, Roberto Barbera, Malcolm Atkinson and David Fergusson. Participants consisted of young researchers from technical industries, research laboratories and academic environments who were interested in using or developing Grid technologies.

During the two-week school, the 67 students received an in-depth introduction to Grid technologies and applications and were exposed to principles, research challenges, and capabilities of existing tools as well as expert views on the potential of general-purpose e-Infrastructures.

Professor Miron Livny, Chair of this year's Programme Committee commented: "Once again the international summer school demonstrated the power of openness, sharing and collaboration, which are the pillars of Grid computing. Students and instructors with a broad spectrum of interests and expertise came together to get exposed to new ideas, share requirements and collaborate on addressing the challenges we face in translating the concepts of distributed computing into dependable tools."

The school was endorsed by the Global Grid Forum and sponsored by the Italian National Institute for Nuclear Physics (INFN), the Institute for High Performance Computing and Networking (ICAR-Napoli), Institute for Composite and Biomedical Materials (IMCB), the SPACI consortium, the FIRB Grid.it Project, the Condor project and the EGEE project.

For more information, please visit the ISSGC05 website.

Register Now for Fourth EGEE Conference

We are soon approaching the fourth EGEE conference in Pisa, Italy, 24-28 October. This high profile event will feature keynote speakers from the European Union and Italian government as well as leading international figures in science and technology. The theme of the conference will be creating and managing knowledge in the scientific community and building solutions which can be exported to industry and commerce.

A series of workshops will bring together delegates from many different countries, providing them with the opportunity to share knowledge, experiences and discuss the future. The conference will also give members of the project the opportunity to evaluate their achievements, prepare for the last EU review and plan for the next phase of the project.

Delegates also have the opportunity to propose topics for a special 'Panel Plenary' taking place on the morning of Tuesday 25 October. The panel will there to address questions, queries, worries or wishes relating to any aspect of the project and its future. To post a question, fill-in this simple webform.

Click here for more details about registration, to view the programme, venue, hotels and local attractions.

Training News

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Forthcoming Training Events

For full event listings, see here

EGEE Demonstrators – All Hands Meeting, Nottingham, UK, 19-22 September
For further details, see http://www.allhands.org.uk.

Induction to Grid Computing and the NGS, Edinburgh, UK, 29-30 September
For further details, see http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/563.

Tutorial at Grid@work Event, Sophia Antopolis, France, 10 October
For further details, see http://www.etsi.org/plugtests/upcoming/grid/Conf_tutorials.htm.

EGEE Fourth Conference Training Day, Pisa, Italy, 23 October
For further details, see http://agenda.cern.ch/fullAgenda.php?ida=a055598.

Induction events at the annual Austrian Grid symposia, Hagenberg Austria , 1-2 December
For further details, see http://www.austriangrid.at/symposium/.

Further Education

MSc. in e-Science, University of Edinburgh
This course will begin at the start of the next academic year. For further details, see http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/msc_escience.html.

Grid Summer Schools

GirdKa Summer School, FZK, Karlsruhe, Germany, 26-30 September
This event will feature tutorials on gLite Introduction and Installation, Application Development and ROOT/PROOF.

Training Material

A great deal of training material can be found in the NA3 Training Material Archive at: http://www.egee.nesc.ac.uk/trgmat/index.html.

Current course material is available in:
- EGEE Induction
- Globus Toolkit
- LCG2 APIs
- LCG2 Installation and Administration
- UML for developing web services
- Web Services

We expect to be adding the first gLite material in the coming months.

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Endnotes

If you have comments on the newsletter, or any submissions for future issues, please contact owen.appleton@cern.ch. Thanks for reading, and see you in Pisa!

EGEE   INFSO-RI-508833