Dear EGEE-II project members,

The 3rd User Forum was held last week, on 11-14 February, in Clermont Ferrand, France. 310 participants attended the event, which featured 111 presentations, 19 demos and 37 posters. A mixture of plenaries and parallel sessions completed the event's agenda, and summaries of the parallel sessions were given on the last day covering all the disciplines present and the thematic areas. The External Advisory Committee attended the User Forum, providing their perspective and impressions, as well as voting for the best demonstration. The awards went to:

- Best demonstration prize: "The Health-e-Child (HeC) Gateway and Case Reasoner, a Concrete Implementation and Use-Case of a gLite-based Healthgrid for European Paediatrics"
http://indico.cern.ch/contributionDisplay.py?contribId=163&sessionId=6&confId=22351
- Best poster prize (voted by the public): "Fair Grid Scheduling"
http://indico.cern.ch/contributionDisplay.py?contribId=66&sessionId=49&confId=22351

The presentations, demonstrations and posters shown testify to the wealth and diversity of the applications currently running on the EGEE infrastructure. Looking back over the three annual user forums, the basic question has changed from "if" grids can be used to produce scientific results to "how best" to use the grid to these ends as well as new business models.

The grid communities' thoughts have consequently moved from examining the infrastructure itself to looking at the most appropriate higher-level services and the user forum confirmed that gLite has established itself as a key platform which is capable of supporting such exciting developments. The creation of the RESPECT programme (Recommended External Software for EGEE CommuniTies) is set to be an excellent vehicle for promoting the sharing of such higher-level services between different user communities and future user forums will provide great opportunities for expanding its content and impact.

The transition towards the EGI model was presented in the plenary session and this led to some good suggestions for how the user forum event itself can be part of the transition process.

All details of the User Forum can be found on http://indico.cern.ch/conferenceDisplay.py?confId=22351. A book of abstracts will be published by June 2008.

A Project Management Board meeting was held during the User Forum where the following activity managers for EGEE-III were approved:

- SA1 – operations: Maité Barroso (CERN)

- SA2 – network support: Xavier Jeannin (CNRS/UREC)

- SA3 – middleware certification: Oliver Keeble (CERN)

- JRA1 – middleware development: Francesco Giacomini (INFN)

- NA2 – dissemination & outreach: CERN is considering candidates and will respond by the end of February.

- NA3 – training: Robin McConnell.

- NA4 – application support: Cal Loomis (CNRS/LAL).

- NA5 – policy and standardisation: Panagiotis Louridas (GRNET)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the activity managers that have contributed to the success of EGEE-II and welcome the new managers. A transition process is being put in place to ensure the change over is as smooth as possible.

Progress of EGEE-III negotiations
The FP7 informatics tools used for collecting all project proposal data encountered numerous problems which caused delays for the negotiation progress. However, the European Commission is confident that the process is moving forward as planned and the start date of EGEE-III will be 1 May 2008. The European commission has also endorsed the EGEE-II project's request for a one month extension.

A transition meeting is scheduled for all participants of the EGEE-III project on 6 and 7 May 2008 at CERN. All details for registration to the event and logistics will be published in the next edition of the Director's letter. The Project Office is currently preparing all documentation and webpages to ensure the start of this new FP7 project is as smooth as possible.

I also take this opportunity to remind you that the final review of the EGEE-II project is scheduled on 8 and 9 July at CERN.

Deliverables submitted recently:
- DNA1.1.7: Project quarterly report.

We are now nearing the end of the EGEE-II project, with two full months to go and a number of key, final deliverables due. I thank you for your continued drive and enthusiasm and look forward to a successful completion of all the hard work undertaken these past two years.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Jones
EGEE-II Project Director

Upcoming events:

Month	Event	URL
March	3-5, OSG All-Hands Meeting, North Carolina, U.S.	http://indico.fnal.gov/conferenceDisplay.py?confId=1037
	4-7, The International Workshop on Grid Computing (WGC'08), Barcelona, Spain	http://www.ares-conference.eu/conf/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=44
	4-9, CeBIT 2008, Hannover, Germany	http://www.cebit.de/homepage_e
	9-12, K-12 School Networking Conference, Crystal City, Virginia, U.S.	http://www.k12schoolnetworking.org/2008/
	11-12, 20th GridPP Collaboration Meeting, Dublin, Ireland	http://www.gridpp.ac.uk/gridpp20/
	17-21, PerCom IEEE International Conference on Pervasive Computing and Communications, Hong Kong	http://www.percom.org/
	18-19, Telepresence World 2008, London, UK	http://www.telepresenceworld.com/
	26-28, Semantic Scientific Knowledge Integration AAAI/SSS Worksop, Stanford, California, U.S.	http://www.ksl.stanford.edu/people/dlm/sss08/home/SSKI.html