



EGI-InSPIRE

USER SUPPORT CONTACTS

EU MILESTONE: MS301

Document identifier:	EGI-MS301-final
Date:	05/11/2010
Activity:	NA3
Lead Partner:	INFN
Document Status:	FINAL
Dissemination Level:	PUBLIC
Document Link:	https://documents.egi.eu/document/60

Abstract

The document describes the process of establishing and confirming contact points inside NGIs for support services provided for end users of the infrastructure (services such as training, application porting, VO setup, etc.). The document does not include the list of contacts – which is kept and maintained in EGI.eu – but it does describe the process of how can one access this user support contacts list.

I. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Copyright © Members of the EGI-InSPIRE Collaboration, 2010. See www.egi.eu for details of the EGI-InSPIRE project and the collaboration. EGI-InSPIRE (“European Grid Initiative: Integrated Sustainable Pan-European Infrastructure for Researchers in Europe”) is a project co-funded by the European Commission as an Integrated Infrastructure Initiative within the 7th Framework Programme. EGI-InSPIRE began in May 2010 and will run for 4 years. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, and USA. The work must be attributed by attaching the following reference to the copied elements: “Copyright © Members of the EGI-InSPIRE Collaboration, 2010. See www.egi.eu for details of the EGI-InSPIRE project and the collaboration”. Using this document in a way and/or for purposes not foreseen in the license, requires the prior written permission of the copyright holders. The information contained in this document represents the views of the copyright holders as of the date such views are published.

II. DELIVERY SLIP

	Name	Partner/Activity	Date
From	Gergely Sipos	EGI.eu	14/07/2010
Reviewed by	Moderator: Jamie Shiers Reviewers: Vera Hansper	CERN, SA3 CSC, SA1	21/07/2010
Approved by	AMB & PMB		22/07/2010

III. DOCUMENT LOG

Issue	Date	Comment	Author/Partner
2.0	02/07/2010	First and second draft	Gergely Sipos, EGI.eu
3.0	05/07/2010	First complete document (v3)	Luciano Gaido, INFN
4.0	07/07/2010	Second complete document (v4), sent for internal review	Gergely Sipos, EGI.eu
5.0	14/07/2010	Draft for review	Gergely Sipos, Steve Brewer, EGI.eu
6.0	19/07/2010	Changes requested by Steven Newhouse, EGI.eu	Gergely Sipos, EGI.eu
7.0	22/07/2010	Changes requested by reviewers	Gergely Sipos, EGI.eu

IV. APPLICATION AREA

This document is a formal deliverable for the European Commission, applicable to all members of the EGI-InSPIRE project, beneficiaries and Joint Research Unit members, as well as its collaborating projects.

V. DOCUMENT AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Amendments, comments and suggestions should be sent to the authors. The procedures documented in the EGI-InSPIRE “Document Management Procedure” will be followed:

<https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Procedures>



VI. TERMINOLOGY

A complete project glossary is provided at the following page: <http://www.egi.eu/results/glossary/>.



VII. PROJECT SUMMARY

To support science and innovation, a lasting operational model for e-Science is needed – both for coordinating the infrastructure and for delivering integrated services that cross national borders.

The EGI-InSPIRE project will support the transition from a project-based system to a sustainable pan-European e-Infrastructure, by supporting ‘grids’ of high-performance computing (HPC) and high-throughput computing (HTC) resources. EGI-InSPIRE will also be ideally placed to integrate new Distributed Computing Infrastructures (DCIs) such as clouds, supercomputing networks and desktop grids, to benefit user communities within the European Research Area.

EGI-InSPIRE will collect user requirements and provide support for the current and potential new user communities, for example within the ESFRI projects. Additional support will also be given to the current heavy users of the infrastructure, such as high energy physics, computational chemistry and life sciences, as they move their critical services and tools from a centralised support model to one driven by their own individual communities.

The objectives of the project are:

1. The continued operation and expansion of today’s production infrastructure by transitioning to a governance model and operational infrastructure that can be increasingly sustained outside of specific project funding.
2. The continued support of researchers within Europe and their international collaborators that are using the current production infrastructure.
3. The support for current heavy users of the infrastructure in earth science, astronomy and astrophysics, fusion, computational chemistry and materials science technology, life sciences and high energy physics as they move to sustainable support models for their own communities.
4. Interfaces that expand access to new user communities including new potential heavy users of the infrastructure from the ESFRI projects.
5. Mechanisms to integrate existing infrastructure providers in Europe and around the world into the production infrastructure, so as to provide transparent access to all authorised users.
6. Establish processes and procedures to allow the integration of new DCI technologies (e.g. clouds, volunteer desktop grids) and heterogeneous resources (e.g. HTC and HPC) into a seamless production infrastructure as they mature and demonstrate value to the EGI community.

The EGI community is a federation of independent national and community resource providers, whose resources support specific research communities and international collaborators both within Europe and worldwide. EGI.eu, coordinator of EGI-InSPIRE, brings together partner institutions established within the community to provide a set of essential human and technical services that enable secure integrated access to distributed resources on behalf of the community.



The production infrastructure supports Virtual Research Communities (VRCs) – structured international user communities – that are grouped into specific research domains. VRCs are formally represented within EGI at both a technical and strategic level.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The document describes the process of establishing and confirming contact points inside NGIs for support services provided for end users of the infrastructure (services such as training, application porting, VO setup, etc.). The document does not include the list of contacts –which is kept and maintained in EGI.eu –but it does prescribe the process of how one can access this user support contact list.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	7
2	COLLECTING AND STORING NGI USER SUPPORT CONTACTS	8
2.1	Accessing the user support contacts database	8
3	CONCLUSION	9
4	REFERENCES	10



1 INTRODUCTION

Grid services, operational and support expertise, and user communities of EGI are distributed across Europe and beyond, and therefore, a central coordination of key data is of paramount importance. The EGI.eu [R1] central coordination centre, located in Amsterdam, has been established in order to act as a glue for the various NGIs that constitute the EGI infrastructure and the EGI-InSPIRE project.

With respect to support, EGI-InSPIRE provides a central Helpdesk tool, GGUS [R2], operated by KIT [R3] interfaced with many regional Helpdesk Systems that were setup during the EGEE projects. A description of this service can be found in section 6 of EGEE-III's deliverable DSA1.2.2 [R4] A distributed model for support was already in place during EGEE-III [R5] and all of the relevant support teams contacts had been collected for EGI.

According to EGI-InSPIRE's Description of Work (DoW) [R6], NA3 activity (WP3) aims at integrating the user communities' current and future use of the infrastructure. This is achieved by:

- Coordinating the effective, responsive support for the EGI user communities (both individual VOs and those represented by Virtual Research Communities) through the efforts of the national and specialist support units;
- Coordinating training, documentation and technical requirements from the user communities to improve the EGI user experience and services;
- Coordinating the technical services to support the establishment and management of virtual organisations.

One of the main changes in the transition from EGEE-III to EGI-InSPIRE is related to the operations structures; the original Regional Operations Centres (ROCs) are being gradually replaced by an increasing number of NGI's Operations Centres. This has a great impact on the support organisation since the new topology, and also the support groups, is far more distributed than it was in the past. For this reason it is important that:

- All of the involved actors (EGI.eu, NGIs and user communities) know who is involved in the support activity and what is each one's role.
- The GGUS system contains information about all of the existing support units so that tickets can be correctly assigned or routed to the appropriate support team.

Therefore information about the user support communities and teams is being collected and it is stored in a database kept by the User Community Support Team of EGI.eu.

This milestone document describes the process of establishing these contact points from the NGIs for user facing support consisting of training, application porting, VO setup, etc. The document does not include the list of contacts. This list is available in the internal storage space of EGI.eu. The document provides information on the process of how can one access the list.

2 COLLECTING AND STORING NGI USER SUPPORT CONTACTS

In order to collect the information about the NGI user support contacts for various important NA3 activities (e.g. training, application porting, consultation and VO support), an email was recently sent by the EGI.eu User Community Support Team (UCST) to the NGI Operations Managers (NOC) mailing list. This list is the evolution of the former EGEE-III ROC managers mailing list and currently has technical contacts from every NGI.

Every NGI has been asked to supply user support contact details for the following key NA3 activities, covering name, email address, phone number (if available) and Single Sign On (SSO) account name:

- Main user support contact for NGI User Support team (this should be the NGI's coordinator of user support activities);
- Training contact (activities: scheduling and delivery of courses; operating training services, etc.);
- Application porting support contact (activities: registering applications to Application Database and consulting with new communities);
- Documentation contact (activity: updating available documentation);
- Portals and science gateways contact (activities: adoption, development and provision of solutions);
- Dashboards and resource allocation contact (activities: monitoring the allocation of sites to VOs; enabling new VOs on the sites);

As the NGIs may be very different in terms of size and resources it is anticipated that the smaller ones will provide the same name (or a couple of names) for all the support activities, whereas other, larger NGIs will provide more than one person for each category. The NGI's main user support contact may also be contacted for managerial activities, whereas all the other contacts will have a technical role only.

For those NGIs that do not supply the requested information it will be assumed that their NOC contact will act as user support coordinator, at least at the beginning. However, it will be possible to update information in the future, by contacting the User Community Support Team at EGI.eu [R7].

2.1 Accessing the user support contacts database

The user support contacts are currently kept in an NGI contact database by EGI.eu. Access to this database is currently restricted to EGI.eu staff. The access list will be made available to NGIs through the SSO system provided by the EGI-InSPIRE project. In the meantime members of the EGI collaboration can obtain user support contacts from the Chief Customer Officer of EGI [R8], who also coordinates the User Community Support Team of EGI.eu.

As part of the evaluation and regular update of user support mechanisms, the project will investigate if GGUS could be used as a tool to route support request from users directly to the NGI user support contacts.



3 CONCLUSION

The process of collecting NGI user support contacts started soon after the launch of the project. After a slow start a detailed picture began to emerge. The database is established inside EGI.eu, with currently holding confirmed and detailed user support contacts for 19 NGIs. The database is kept up to date by the User Community Support Group of EGI.eu. Those NGIs that have not provided dedicated contacts for user support activities are currently registered on user support issues through their technical representatives. The database of confirmed support contacts will be used by the project to make user support processes more efficient, to route user support request to the right persons as quickly as possible.



4 REFERENCES

R 1	<i>The EGI.eu mission</i> (http://www.egi.eu/about/mission.html)
R 2	<i>The GGUS portal</i> (https://gus.fzk.de/pages/home.php)
R 3	<i>Karlsruhe Institute of Technology</i> (http://www.kit.edu/english/index.php)
R 4	<i>EGEE-III DSA1.2.2: Assessment of production service status</i> (https://edms.cern.ch/document/1060571)
R 5	<i>EGEE-III project</i> (http://www.eu-egee.org/)
R 6	<i>EGI-InSPIRE Description of Work (DoW)</i> (https://documents.egi.eu/secure/ShowDocument?docid=10)
R 7	<i>Members of the User Community Support Team in EGI.eu</i> (http://www.egi.eu/about/staff)