

Press release

International Desktop Grid Federation will assist to get millions of volunteers at home donating computing time to science

Addressing European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes' vision

Amsterdam, 2010-09-15, Currently, about half a million computers from people at home contribute each day unused computing time to science. This already is a considerable contribution to scientists who need computing power to solve important problems, such as the energy crisis, the design of new drugs, and the spreading of disease. However, with more than one billion PCs in the world the computational power, available to scientists could easily be increased a hundred fold, speeding up the process of scientific discovery. The International Desktop Grid Federation, officially launched today in Amsterdam, assists in that process, by bringing together operators of and developers for Volunteer Desktop Grids. By exchanging information, providing training and support to its members, and by helping new Volunteer Desktop Grids to be started. The International Desktop Grid Federation is an initiative from the partners of the EDGI and DEGISCO projects, but meanwhile also others have joined. If people do not wish to lag behind in Desktop Grid computing, they need to join. IDGF will help the vision Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes expressed in her 14 September release: "European researchers' access to greater computing power will help them to tackle major research challenges in areas such as climate change and healthcare. The European Grid Infrastructure will help strengthen Europe's hand in research and give our scientists the support they need, whilst saving energy and cutting costs." IDGF will take care Volunteer Desktop Grids can be seamlessly integrated into the European Grid Infrastructure.

Desktop Grids and Desktop Clouds allow to employ otherwise idle computing time of Desktop computers for large computational programmes. Desktop Grids can be used inside an organisation, or they can collect computing time from volunteers all over a city, a country, or even all over the world.

However, operating a desktop grid and developing programmes for desktop grids poses specific challenges. That is why the International Desktop Grid Federation is formed.

The International Desktop Grid Federation is a member organisation that brings together people from companies, universities and institutes that are interested in using this type of computing power and that want to exchange experiences with others.

The Federation provides several services to its members. This includes face-to-face meetings, in workshops and tutorials, a library of documentation, message boards, a portal and help by experts.

Members of the International Desktop Grid Federation get access to a wealth of experience in Desktop Grid and Cloud computing expertise and have the opportunity to meet face-to-face or online with fellow Desktop Grid developers and users.

At meetings, workshops and conferences, organized by the International Desktop Grid Federation (IDGF), members can meet and discuss with colleague members about the issues and benefits of operating Desktop Grids, developing applications for them, or using them.

IDGF will also host training sessions and tutorials. An extensive set of tutorials are available from introductory level to advanced tutorials on integrating Desktop Grids into existing distributed computing environments. At regular times international IDGF experts will give workshops and tutorials all over Europe and across the world.

IDGF membership includes technical expert support offered in operating Desktop Grids and programming for Desktop Grids. Experts from the supporting projects are available who can help with specific issues. One can think here in terms of technical expert support with regard to connecting Desktop Grids with other Grids, Clouds and other distributed computing infrastructures.

The IDGF online community provides an interactive and lively Web portal and information centre with reference material available in several languages, and a Forum with messages boards on Desktop Grid topics. The idea is to create a vibrant community of Desktop Grid experts who will put Desktop Grid and Cloud computing on the global map. The International Desktop Grid Federation will be the place for professional Grid and Cloud people who want to become familiar with Desktop Grid expertise but do not wish to reinvent the wheel.

Today already 20 organisations (60 persons) are member of the International Desktop Grid Federation. The ball has already started to roll and there is a rich choice of documentation waiting for members to discover at the IDGF portal. We expect a large growth in the near future. The aim is to increase the usefulness of Desktop Grids for scientists and increase the number of active volunteer computers by at least ten fold in the next two years.

This release nicely complements the announcement by Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes yesterday: “Digital Agenda: EU grid project unlocks processing power of 200,000 desktop computers for European researchers”

[http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?
reference=IP/10/1119&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1119&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

Kroes announced support for the European Grid Infrastructure (EGI) project: EGI-Inspire. EGI can be considered the European backbone of the main European computational infrastructure for science. Hence, it is important for Volunteer Desktop Grids to be connected to EGI. IDGF will enable this connection, through its supporting projects EDGI and DEGISCO. EDGI closely collaborates for instance with EGI-Inspire on developing a common road map for computational infrastructures to support science in Europe.

More information and application opportunity at: <http://desktopgridfederation.org>

Note for the Editors

More information on this press release

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