

The University of Edinburgh

Press Release

Date: 6th September 2004

Grid-Networked Computing Brings Science Processing Power To Industry

The European Commission is to grant €52 million to twelve European research projects, that aim to bring Grid networked computing out of the research laboratories and into industry. Grid tools are seen as key to boosting business competitiveness and helping creation of new markets and services by giving everyone access to the vast computing power and knowledge resources that up to now have only been available to the biggest companies and research centres. By enabling users to monitor and model everything from climate change to how cars behave in collisions, they will also help to improve the quality of life.

Collectively, the 12 projects' goals reflect EU Grid research policy of combining "technology push" (developing underlying technologies and interoperability standards), with "application pull" (developing the enabling technologies needed for real-world applications, such as modelling, simulation, data mining and collaborative working tools). The funding for the projects comes from the EU's sixth research Framework Programme (FP6).

EPCC, Europe's leading technology transfer centre based at the University of Edinburgh is coordinating the most ambitious of the 12 initiatives just launched. The €11 million NextGRID project focuses on the next generation of the Grid. The goal of NextGRID is to develop the software 'glue' (referred to as 'middleware' by computer experts) to allow grids to be built and made to work. This will prepare the way for the broader use of Grid technologies and their widespread adoption by organisations and individuals from all walks of life. NextGRID will be a key step towards realising the vision of Grid computing and making it as ubiquitous as the Web is today.

Speaking at the start of the project NextGRID Chairman Dr Mark Parsons said: "Grid computing is coming of age. It's now moving from the research laboratory into business."

A pan-European consortium has been assembled to achieve these important goals. Partners include Intel, BT, Microsoft, SAP and leading research centres such as FIJZ.

European Grid Technology Days, a public launch event for the EU-funded Grid projects, is being hosted by the European Commission on 15 September, 2004 in Brussels. F. Colasanti, Director General of Information Society of the European Commission, will speak at the event, as will senior figures from European industry and research including Dr. Isidoro Padilla, CEO, Telefónica I+D; Dr. Joachim Schaper, Vice President of SAP; Dr. Steve Sim; General Manager Research, British Telecom; Dr. Gilles Kahn, President and CEO, INRIA France and Dr. John Taylor OBE, ex-Director General UK Research Councils. These and other high level participants will be available for interview.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk>

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For more information on NextGRID or to arrange an interview please contact:

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Notes for Editors:

A detailed agenda for the launch event can be viewed online at:

<http://www.nextgrid.org/events/1509.html>

There is on-line registration for those wishing to attend the 15 September 2004 public launch event:

<http://www.nextgrid.org/events/registration.htm>

Background information on EU-funded Grid Research:

<http://www.cordis.lu/ist/grids/>

Other useful websites:

www.NextGRID.org

www.epcc.ed.ac.uk

www.cordis.lu/ist

The consortium of the NextGRID project contains many of Europe's leading experts in advanced computing technologies from both business and academia:

EPCC, the University of Edinburgh	First Derivatives
GridSystems	CNR-ISTI
Fujitsu Laboratories of Europe (FLE)	Queen's University Belfast
FJZ Research Centre Jülich	TSI
HRLS	SAP
KTH	KINO
Microsoft	Caesar
IT Innovation	HP-EIC
Intel	NEC
BT	ICCS/NTUA
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