

Dear EGEE-III project members,

As the year winds down and the daylight hours wane, I send you my thanks for your hard work and dedication this year and best wishes for a relaxing and joyous holiday season.

Reflecting on 2008, it has truly been an active year for the project and 2009 should be more exciting still as EGEE prepares to pass the world's largest multi-disciplinary grid infrastructure over to the European Grid Initiative. During the year all the project's activities have contributed to increase the scale and quality of grid services provided to the growing user communities. There have been some key events and strategic developments in the past year which I would like to recall.

Last February in Clermont Ferrand, France, our User Forum attracted over 300 participants. At this event I was struck by the fact that we have clearly moved on from asking "if" grids can support science efficiently to asking "how best" to use grids for excellence in science and business.

In May, the project transitioned to its third phase with the Transition Meeting, and received warm praise from European Commission appointed reviewers during the EGEE-II final review in July.

It was also a pleasure to see so many of you last September in Istanbul at EGEE'08. The annual conference this year attracted 545 people from 48 countries, giving 285 presentations across 97 sessions—truly a testimony to the international face of grids! The interaction between grids and clouds was explored and will surely become increasingly important for the future. I was particularly impressed by the contributions made by the collaborating projects and the innovative ways in which they are extending the use and functionality of the grid infrastructure.

The project's reach greatly expanded in 2008 as eight FP7 projects started collaborating with EGEE: BalticGrid-II, Belief-II, D4Science, DORII, EUAsiaGrid, GridTalk, OGF-Europe, SEE-GRID-SCI. Many of these strategic relationships are being formalised via Memoranda of Understanding which clarify how the projects will work together.

EGEE's business activities continued to foster new collaborations. In just over 12 months, EGEE has built up an impressive list of Business Associates, all experts in distributed computing and market trends. Two new associates joined the program in 2008: Constellation Technologies (UK) and Linalis (Switzerland), joining Avanade, Excelian, GridwiseTech, Hitachi, NICE and Platform.

This year we also bid farewell to our Technical Director Erwin Laure and welcomed Steven Newhouse to take over the task. While we were sad to say goodbye to Erwin, we are delighted to have Steven onboard and are already benefiting from his input and experience.

The interaction with the EGI Design Study project has been continuous throughout the year with a series of workshops and EGEE personnel have contributed to the evolving plan for the establishment of EGI. The crucial deliverable *DNA1.4: Planning the EGI transition* has been finalised and will be submitted to the European Commission by 15 December.

Looking forward to next year our primary focus will be the implementation of this transition. An All-Activity meeting will be held in Brussels in January to follow-up these plans in light of the final EGI Blueprint. All this will be further refined next March on the occasion of the 4<sup>th</sup> User Forum in Catania, Italy. This event (2-6 March) will be co-located with Open Grid Forum 25 and OGF-Europe's 2nd International Event and will host several workshops dedicated to making the EGI transition a successful reality. Registration has just opened at: <http://indico.cern.ch/confRegistrationFormDisplay.py?confId=40435> and the call for abstracts has been extended until 15<sup>th</sup> December. If you have not yet submitted your abstract don't delay!

After the User Forum we will start preparing for the first EGEE-III review due to be held at CERN on 24 and 25 June. Until then, we will need to update the programme of work for the second year of the project, taking into account changes to ensure simplification of the transition to a sustainable Grid infrastructure.

Finally, peering further in to the future, we will be heading to the city of Gaudi for EGEE'09, 21-25 September, in Barcelona, Spain.

Before starting on the activities for 2009, however, I wish you all well-deserved, restful holidays. I hope this is a joyous time of year for you and your loved ones.

Yours sincerely,



Bob Jones  
EGEE-III Project Director

The following events are organised by EGEE or will feature important EGEE contributions. For further related events please see [www.isgtw.org](http://www.isgtw.org).

Month	Event	LINK
January	14-15, <a href="#">Cloudscape, OGF-Europe Cloud Computing Workshop</a> , Brussels, Belgium	<a href="http://www.ogfeurope.eu/index.php/home/calendar/thematic-workshops/technology-workshops">http://www.ogfeurope.eu/index.php/home/calendar/thematic-workshops/technology-workshops</a>

If you are organising EGEE-related events that you would like to publicise here please email Neasan O'Neill at [n.oneill@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:n.oneill@qmul.ac.uk)