



## IBERGRID FEEDBACK ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC VIEW TO SUPPORT USER COMMUNITIES IN EGI

Contributions from:

Ignacio Blanquer, Gonçalo Borges, Isabel Campos, Jorge Gomes and  
Jesús Marco

*\* Feedback and Comments are much appreciated ([coor@es-ngi.es](mailto:coor@es-ngi.es))*

The objective of this document is to address the, in our opinion, urgent need to clarify what we (EGI) could offer to new User Communities: Resources, Services and Functionalities. We also want to stress the need for a tighter collaboration among NGIs under the coordination of EGI.eu: NGIs should be the main resource, service and knowledge providers. When a new user community is identified (top), the effort should be organized from the national level (bottom). There is a need for a better way to organize the expertise and monitor the progress. This is a management action, which in the end will be the measure of the added value of EGI.eu.

In the following we develop some ideas about how to implement such strategy in the framework of EGI-InSPIRE inside the NA2-NA3 work packages. We do not feel this is the moment to open a discussion about Person Month shifting, but rather it is the time for all parties involved to exercise responsibility, driving EGI in the correct way to achieve the goals for which the organization was created for.

### 1. NA2.3 Policy development

The lack of EGI Resource Allocation policies is an open problem. In our appreciation we are still in this respect under the inertia of the situation inherited from the EGEE series of projects in which the infrastructure, mainly HEP, is owned by the users and allocated according to the rules of the HEP community. This is a valid model for supporting EIROs and in general communities owning and operating their infrastructure and willing to integrate it in EGI, but it is not well defined for any other purpose.

When approaching new communities, the existence of clear policy in this respect is a *must*, to the point that it is becoming an "existential" problem for EGI in general: we need to have clear guidelines about what to offer and under which conditions to user communities not owning / running / deploying the resources themselves. **The EGI Infrastructure has 300.000+ cores, the real question is how these resources are allocated.**

It is also necessary to create a catalogue describing the EGI technological offer: e-infrastructure capabilities, know-how at the different research groups, etc... Although this probably belongs to the current SA2 work package, **the interaction between SA2 and NA2 to promote the EGI technological offer needs to be consolidated.**

In our opinion the technological offer + a clear resource allocation policy should concentrate most of the work in Policy development in the upcoming months in the tasks NA2.3.

This could be implemented as a service in the context of an "**EGI Technological Marketplace**" implemented as a NA3 task. One can think as main functionalities:

1. A central place where NGIs could declare (or event negotiate between each other) the amount of resources they offer to communities that do not have any.
2. A central place that could be used to monitor which NGIs are in the limit of their resource usage, and which NGIs are underused. Someone could try to negotiate with the less used NGIs so that they could offer those resources to other communities, even if on a temporary basis
3. A central place where NGIs could declare the teams with expertise in several fields like porting of applications, deployment of portals, etc...
4. A central place where NGIs could declare which tools and technologies are they using, and since when.

The guidelines of such Resource Allocation need to take into account the peculiarities of a distributed infrastructure, which builds on the promise of providing added value with respect to other platforms based on seamless access, transparency and the delivery of a collaborative framework for accessing e-infrastructures. It is clear that such Resource Allocation policy document will not be static, as it depends on the technological developments, so it will evolve in parallel to the UMD. Each NGI will implement it following the general spirit, but taking into account the idiosyncrasies at the country level.

***Without a clear Resource Allocation policy in place we do not have firm grounds to start a discussion about sustainability, because there is no understanding about the meaning of those resources.***

## **2. NA2.1 and NA2.2: Dissemination in EGI.eu and NGIs**

With respect to the NA2 task in our opinion the objective of NA2 in EGI.eu (i.e. coordinating task) needs to focus in the identification of international user communities from its early state, and the dissemination of that information towards the NGIs. It is also to be expected that NA2 at EGI.eu maintain an **up-to-date catalogue** of information containing the distribution and needs of **international user communities (ESFRI maps** for example). The existence of such catalogue will become an important **asset** for the EGI community.

On the NGI side, and as international tasks, NA2 needs to locate and promote the usage of the EGI infrastructure at the level of national users involved in international collaborations and ESFRI projects. The communication between EGI.eu and the NGIs is crucial because due to the nature of the international collaborations funding bodies, sometimes the information flow goes primarily via European oriented organizations, therefore often EGI.eu might learn about a newly created collaboration before the NGI where those users work does. However it is then the job of the NGI to get in touch with that community at the local level.

Therefore, NA2 as an NGI International task needs to receive that feedback and establishing the contact with the users of the country, and report upwards to EGI.eu for coordination purposes.

## **3. User Community Support (NA3.2) and NGI Support Teams (NA3.3)**

The distinction between NA3.2 and NA3.3, in the practical implementation of the DoW, seems artificial when confronted with the reality of everyday work. NA3 EGI.eu should be the coordinator of the process of identification of communities with the support of NA2, first order requirements, resource availability analysis in cooperation with the NGIs, and in general, facilitation of the communication between the NGIs when supporting international user communities.

A merging of NA2 and NA3 needs to be analyzed with care because the team needs to show technical expertise when approaching user communities for dissemination purposes. It is unlikely that scientific users (very focused on their every day work) pay any attention to people without the necessary background to understand their technical needs.

For support purposes an International Community is defined by the following parameters:

- **Who are the users and its distribution:** NGIs involvement in user support
  - In particular, a map with the user distribution for each ESFRI is badly needed
- **Requirements in term of e-infrastructures at the technical level:**
  - Does the current UMD we meet the needs?
    - Yes ☺
    - No: Exploit the potential in the R&D teams to develop those new services
- **Size of the Resources needed** by that community in measurable terms (making clear that "a lot" is not measurable)

If the community itself owns resources and is willing to integrate those resources in the EGI infrastructure, one needs to define the procedure to integrate those resources as part of EGI and operate from within using our global services: analysis of the cost. EIROs are a particular case of this situation. If the community does not own resources, and needs to buy them, it is necessary to define the offer of EGI for this community and do the costs analysis. This step requires a well-defined Resource Allocation Policy.

To summarize, a very strong focus is put on understanding the technological requirements of the community, and providing them a good integration plan. Basically, once the community attention is captured, it is necessary to increase the momentum. In this point, we can foreseen several services:

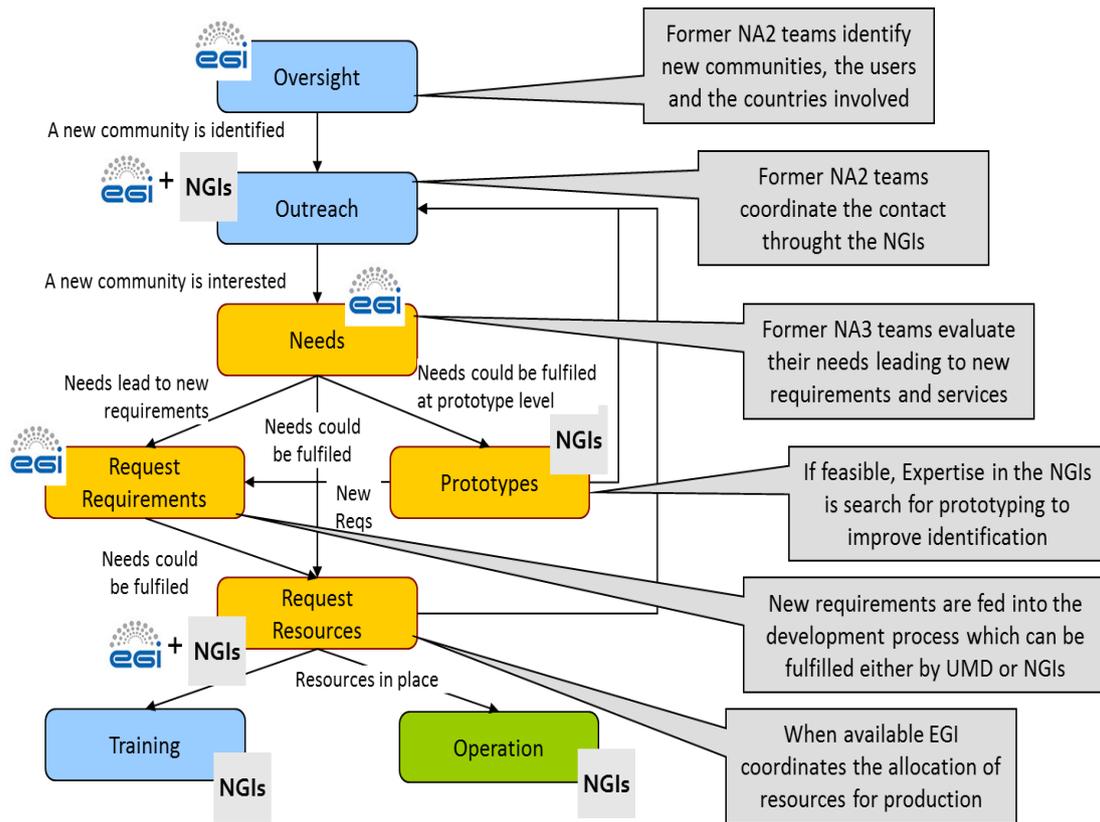
1. Provide a solution, which better fits the user community needs in terms of technology. This means having a catalogue of portals and applications and understanding their functionalities. The AppDB must be enhanced to meet these goals.
2. Once identified the services and tools needed, one would need some teams with the sufficient expertise for building a pilot and for fast prototyping. The identification of the proper teams would have to rely on the information of a tool such as the one proposed in section 1)

#### 4. Extended view of TNA3.4 services

Under the framework presented in previous sections, the services delivered under TNA3.4 may play an important role. The following needs were clearly identified:

- ^ Need to clarify what EGI could offer to new User Communities in terms of:
  - Resources: Need for a policy to assign / search for resources and the tools to support it;
  - New Services and functionalities: Need for an inventory of services at the NGI level, and Porting capabilities
  - Need for a marketplace of experience and capabilities.
  - Need for a clear identification of user distributions per ESFRI
- ^ Need for tighter collaboration with NGIs. NGIs should be the main resource, service and knowledge providers. When a new user community is identified (top), the effort should be organized from the national level (bottom). There is a need for a better way to organize the expertise and monitor the progress.

The focus of the VO Services task under this new context should be shifted to build a service that could cover some of the identified needs. Type of services that could be delivered: Inventories of services and resources at the NGIs and the tools associated; Services to guide new communities on defining needs, Market place of expertizes (application porting) and resource negotiation...



c)