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General Chairs' Message

As conference co-chairs, we have great pleasure in writing this short foreword to the proceedings of the 2nd European AcrossGrids Conference (AxGrids 2004). The conference clearly demonstrated the need in Europe for an annual event that brings together the grid research community to share experiences and learn about new developments. This year, in addition to the large number of attendees from across the 25 member states of the European Union, we were especially pleased to welcome fellow researchers from the Americas and the Asia – Pacific region. Only by talking and working together will we realize our vision of building truly global grids.

In addition to the main AxGrids 2004 conference, and thanks to the large number of researchers from European Commission-funded projects who were present, we were able to run a series of GRIDSTART Technical Working Group meetings and we are indebted to the conference organizers for helping with the logistics of this parallel activity.

In particular we would like to express our gratitude to Marios Dikaiakos and his team for working tirelessly over many months to make the conference the smooth-running success that it was. Of course, no conference is complete without speakers and an audience and we would like to thank everyone for their interest and engagement in the many sessions over the three days of the event.

AxGrids 2004 once again demonstrated the need in Europe for an event to bring together the research community. As we move forward into Framework 6 we look forward to its continuation and expansion to represent all of the grid research community in Europe.

June 2004

Mark Parsons
Michal Turala

Editor's Preface

The 2nd European AcrossGrids Conference (AxGrids 2004) aimed to examine the state of the art in research and technology developments in Grid Computing, and provide a forum for the presentation and exchange of views on the latest grid-related research results and future work. The conference was organized by CrossGrid, a European Union-funded project on Grid research, GRIDSTART, the EU-sponsored initiative for consolidating technical advances in grids in Europe, and the University of Cyprus. It continued on from the successful 1st European Across Grids Conference, held in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, in February 2003. AxGrids 2004 was run in conjunction with the 2nd IST Concertation Meeting on Grid Research, which brought together representatives from all EU-funded projects on Grid research for an exchange of experiences and ideas regarding recent developments in European grid research.

The conference was hosted in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, and attracted authors and attendees from all over Europe, the USA, and East Asia. The Program Committee of the conference consisted of 37 people from both academia and industry, and there were 13 external reviewers. Overall, AxGrids 2004 attracted 57 paper submissions (42 full papers and 15 short posters). Papers underwent a thorough review by several Program Committee members and external reviewers. After the review, the Program Chair decided to accept 26 papers (out of 42) for regular presentations, 8 papers for short presentations, and 13 papers for poster presentations. Accepted papers underwent a second review for inclusion in this postproceedings volume, published as part of Springer's Lecture Notes in Computer Science series. Eventually, we decided to include 27 long and 3 short papers, which cover a range of important topics of grid research, from computational and data grids to the Semantic Grid and grid applications.

Here, we would like to thank the Program Committee members, the external reviewers, and the conference session chairs for their excellent work, which contributed to the high-quality technical program of the conference. We would also like to thank the University of Cyprus, IBM, GRIDSTART, and the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA) for making possible the organization of this event through their generous sponsorship. Special thanks go to Maria Poveda for handling organizational issues, to Dr. Pedro Trancoso for setting up and running the Web management system at the Computer Science Department at the University of Cyprus, and to Kyriacos Neocleous for helping with the preparation of the proceedings.

I hope that you find this volume interesting and useful.

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Abstract. Several Grid projects have been established that deploy a “first generation Grid”. In order to categorise existing projects in Europe, we have developed a taxonomy and applied it to 20 European Grid projects funded by the European Commission through the Framework 5 IST programme. We briefly describe the projects and thus provide an overview of current Grid activities in Europe. Next, we suggest future trends based on both the European Grid activities as well as progress of the world-wide Grid community. The work we present here is a source of information that aims to help to promote European Grid development.

1 Introduction

Since the term “Grid” was first introduced, the Grid community has expanded greatly in the last five years. Originally, only a few pioneering projects such as Globus, Condor, Legion and Unicore provided Grid solutions. Now, however, many countries have their own Grid projects that provide specific Grid middleware and infrastructure.

In this paper, in order to give a comprehensive overview of existing technologies and projects in Europe, we establish a general taxonomy for categorising Grid services, tools and projects. This taxonomy is then applied to existing projects in Europe. In particular, within the GRIDSTART [5] framework we have analysed 20 representative Grid projects funded by the European Commission in order to highlight current European trends in Grid computing. The guiding principle behind this taxonomy is to enable the identification of trends in European Grid development and to find out where the natural synergies between projects exist.

Since the need for this taxonomy was practical – and relatively urgent – a certain amount of guidance in the form of “pre-classification” was deemed necessary in the information gathering phase. This meant that rather than asking open questions about the activities of the projects and creating the classification based on the answers, the projects themselves were asked to identify which layers and areas (see later) they worked on according to a classification presented to them in a series of questionnaires. Thus, it is likely that this taxonomy will evolve as the contacts and collaboration between projects increases.

This taxonomy is based on the IST Grid Projects Inventory and Roadmap [4] (a 215 page document). In this paper we extract the key aspects of the data presented in that document and refer to the original document for further details.

The paper should also prove of interest to the broader distributed computing community since the results presented provide a clear overview of how European Grid activities are evolving. The paper supersedes previous work reported in [7] (describing the initial work towards this survey) and [1] (reporting on a preliminary overview). The more up-to-date overview provided in this paper covers new trends and Grid services which are rapidly evolving from standardisation work as well as benefiting from insight into the latest developments in the various projects, that have occurred since the initial overviews were prepared.

2 Taxonomy

Development of Grid environments requires effort in a variety of disciplines, from preparing sufficient network infrastructure, through the design of reliable middleware, to providing applications and tailored to the end users.

The comparison of Grid projects is made according to three different categorisation schemes. The first is by different technological *layers* [2,3] that separate the Grid user from the underlying hardware:

- **Applications and Portals.** Applications such as parameter simulations, and grand-challenge problems, often require considerable computing power, access to remote data sets, and may need to interact with scientific instruments. Grid portals offer web-enabled application services, i.e. users can submit and collect results for their jobs on remote resources through a web interface.
- **Application Environment and Tools.** These offer high-level services that allow programmers to develop applications and test their performance and reliability. Users can then make use of these applications in an efficient and convenient way.
- **Middleware (Generic and Application Specific Services).** This layer offers core services such as remote process management, co-allocation of resources, storage access, information (registry), security, data access and transfer, and Quality of Service (QoS) such as resource reservation and trading.
- **Fabric and Connectivity.** Connectivity defines core communication protocols required for Grid-specific network transactions. The fabric comprises the resources geographically distributed and accessible on the Internet.

The second categorisation scheme concerns technical *areas*, which include topics such as dissemination and testbeds and which address the wider issues the impact of Grid technology. All areas with their projects are listed in Figure 2 which categorises different the aspects of Grid projects.

The third main categorisation scheme in this article focuses on the scientific domain of *applications* as well as the computational approaches used (see Section 3.3). Further related work on an earlier taxonomy of Grid resource management can be found in [6].