OS Fair: Joint OpenAIRE EGI GEANT Workshop

Friday 8 September 2017

This collaborative workshop was organized in the context of coordinating EOSC related activities across large European infrastructures at European and national level. Over 40 people were present, representing over 18 countries.

OpenAIRE NOADs, EGI NGIs, GEANT NRENs and other national open science stakeholders provide complementary but related services for the research lifecycle and each contribute to serve a wide range of communities (research, higher education, libraries, and innovators). The future research support landscape is such that horizontal local, regional and international infrastructures will be providing a range of services; increasing coordination of service provisioning, support and outreach are necessary.

The workshop offered an opportunity for cross-pollination on issues ranging from open scholarship to technical service provision, training, community engagement and support. This half-day interactive workshop took the opportunity of bringing together national e-Infrastructure representatives to discuss gaps, synergies, coordination and service integration opportunities.

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity for brainstorming and learning national approaches to common issues.

The workshop aimed to cover the following issues in the presentations:

- Training
- Technical support and helpdesk provisioning
- Community engagement involving the research community, the librarian community, higher education, industry and SMEs, citizens
- Service integration and provisioning

Introductory Presentations

The presentations outlined the three infrastructures:

EGI: This presentation explained the service catalogue for researchers but highlighted the issue they have in reaching out to researchers. They provide global federated services and a centralized helpdesk. The competence centers are able to support large research communities. Future engagement with SMEs is planned.

GEANT: A pan-European infrastructure providing a portfolio of services for research. It is networked via NRENs. Some of the services include storage/cloud, trust/identity, and real time communication. GEANT takes a disciplinary community approach. One question raised was whether there was any conflict of interest between GEANT and EGI providing similar services in the framework of the EOSC.

OpenAIRE: This presentation covered the Helpdesk activities OpenAIRE provides for a range of stakeholders such as researchers, content providers, funders, research managers, research communities. It highlighted its wide network of 33 NOADs and wide training activities.

Theme 1 '**European and national coordination'**:

This session gave opportunities national/European coordination and collaboration for discussion. The national nodes from the infrastructures were invited to give short overviews on pre-defined themes in the form of a lightning talk.

Session 1: Training, technical support and helpdesk

Lightning talk 1.1 [5'] "A Portuguese Perspective", Pedro Principe, University of Minho
This outline support on H2020 issues (such as policies, RDM) and explained the guidelines for data providers, national workshops, 690 participants to OpenAIRE webinars on a yearly basis.

Lightning talk 1.2 [5'] "The Greek Research and Technology Network (GRNET)", Kostas Koumantaros
GRNET provides high-speed internet connectivity to Greek research and Education communities and to more than 100 connected institutions. The talk highlighted two areas, the services helpdesk (helpdesk on GRNET specifically) and the network helpdesk

Immediate Discussion:
Policies are the most difficult issues to reach consensus on when speaking about research infrastructures and NOADs have the difficult task to try to align local government policies with those of the EC's.
Could the group address legal issues - perhaps via a joint helpdesk?
On the whole, researchers are still not aware of European e-infrastructures and it is hard to raise awareness. How can the infrastructures really reach out to make researchers more aware of our activities?

Session 2: Community outreach and engagement with industry/SMEs

Lightning talk 2.1 [5'] Matthew Dovey, JISC
JISC provides digital services to national researchers and has connections with government, for example govroam. It shares of scientific equipment which are highly specialized / brokering. In addition, it connects repositories CORE https://core.ac.uk/, 20 M records. This network provisioning to industry/SME is a problem as JISC receives state aid, working with science parks is fine. JANET REACH for high speed networking to support industry/research collaboration

Lightning talk 2.2 [5'] "PLGrid national grid and cloud infrastructure for science", Łukasz Dutka, CYFRONET AGH
This is a networking infrastructure connecting all main centers of Poland and provides more capabilities including applications, compute and data infrastructures. This manages software, hardware, expertise, community outreach and training/support. The E-infra development started in 2009 and there are good synergies between domain specific researchers and IT experts.

Theme 2 Service technical architecture and integration

Use case [15'] 'Text mining', Natalia Manola, OpenMinTeD
The OpenMinTeD service was presented. While this service focuses on scientific literature, there is a need to approach different service providers. One of the main issues is how to get access to the content from publishers, repositories and researchers. However there are challenges such as legal issues, technical problems in accessing and sharing content. Much content comes from OpenAIRE and UK's CORE, creating a registry of services and tools.
The talk highlighted the service components of OpenMinTeD: computing, end users, content providers, text mining applications. Some of the issues the infrastructure has to overcome are that content providers are missing PIDs, metadata, AAI issues (to allow smooth access) and legal issues.

Use Case [15'] 'Software appliances digital objects: EGI AppDB and OpenAIRE integrational opportunities' Marios Chatziangelou/IASA
This presentation described the EGI applications database. A community-driven service, it stores software. Entities and relations are in place to improve content discoverability. In terms of using other infrastructures, it could be possible to use OpenAIRE to link appDB and own registry items with globally identified relations. In addition it could be possible to reuse OpenAIRE data to extend the app users' interface and make suggestions based on existing relations (contact names, projects, etc.). In addition it could be possible to act as a repository and populate OpenAIRE.

Immediate discussion
AAI is a cultural and policy issue - need for policies alignment; projects like AARC 1 and 2 are already addressing AAI issues https://aarc-project.eu/ → collaboration among initiatives and infrastructures may help in building up the common sense and use of AAI, and include this issue in each OS National agenda.

How to deal with large datasets for data retrieving purposes? No practical information so far on how to combine HPC with data. OpenMinTed is not providing real time data, they are cached at the moment. NB. the complexity and diversity of the data may increase the difficulty. Information on data locality should be available to allow modern infras to work properly in terms of authorizations: issues at country and EU level → need to harmonize country policies with respect to national infrastructures features, requirements and settings.

Conclusions and outcomes

The workshop was a good basis for future work on the planned 'Cooperation Agreement' between EOSC-hub and OpenAIRE Advance. The agreement will make active collaboration in three areas: Governance, Engagement, Services. Both initiatives leverage infrastructures on the national level, and a better coordination will highlight the gaps and similarities.

The following topics were highlighted as issues for follow up:

European Helpdesks

- OA as a success area, there is little national funding however for open science coordination

National Agendas and Funding

- National players from IT services, libraries and data services should have framework and collaboration agreements in place.
- AAI is a cultural and policy issue - need for policies alignment and include this issue in each OS National agenda.
- Technical issues go hand in hand with policy issues (who is providing what). In some technical areas harmonization is achieved.
- National integration of services. For example AAI: institutions do not provide the same credentials; AAI is a cultural and policy issue - need for policies alignment and include this issue in each OS National agenda.
- There is a need for a catalogue of services to be offered by institutions at a national level.
- Need to find feasible ways to combine computing facilities and large sets of data to make them usable for TDM purposes.

SMEs

- It is very hard to reach SMEs, rather engagement should be with researchers.
- Some SMEs might be interested in storage, computing facilities.
- New business models using infrastructure, open science services.
- Providing to SMEs can be tricky at national level if you are government funded. Precise guidelines are needed to make sure not taking work away from anyone else.
- In Serbia success stories in terms of SMEs participating in EC projects.

Promoting Services and Infrastructures

- How can we offer something attractive to researchers, many prefer to go to ResearchGate, in terms of a national repository. European infrastructures need to consider this.
- A recurring theme during the workshop is that there is need to disseminate among researchers our services.
- A concrete task could be to work for harmonized AAI across countries (at present it is all different) and put it on the national OS agenda.
- There is definitely scope for a workshop to analyze what the researchers need and to see what services could serve them well.