PLANNING an OSG Grid Computing School

This document provides guidelines on organizing and running an workshop (usually 3-day long) on grid computing by OSG staff. For shorter, specialized workshops, these guidelines can be adjusted accordingly.

PRE-CONFERENCE

3 months before

- establish local contacts at hosting venue
- preliminary talks (topics to be covered –see template in Appendix A)
- create announcement (see template in Appendix B)
- create webpage
- create communication mailing lists

2 months before

- look for speakers, lab assistants
- send out Call For Participation (CFP) or 'save the date' messages to different mailing lists and contact directly collaborators to suggest participant names
- post event on OSG and TeraGrid calendars
- venue and hotel arrangements

Hotel requirements

The hotel should be relatively close to the workshop location. When reserving, we should plan for up to 30% of the rooms being single occupancy. OSG-sponsored participants will be placed in double occupancy rooms (student or faculty). The travel arrangements for the supported people should be handled through University of Chicago travel service.

Classrooms requirements

A lecture room with capacity of 50 people and wireless internet access easily accessible. The room must allow instructors to easily walk through the aisles to help students, and also allow students to work in pairs or teams if necessary. In case we have laptops-only environment, the room should provide plenty of power outlets. A few desktops available would be required for people without a laptop.
We should be able to serve food/snacks during breaks, so if the room prohibits this, we should have access to a hallway to setup a refreshments table.

1 month before

- open registration (use UChicago site; automated process)
- receive and analyze applications -> decide "acceptance" list
- send out Acceptance Notifications and Wait-List Notifications
- decide and send out Travel Support notifications

(the OSG EOT coordinator is in charge of the admissions process)

- based on notifications' response (1st round), extend more acceptances from the wait list

2 weeks before

- prepare for conference
- prepare badges, diplomas, handouts (see templates)
- intensify contact with local organizers (onsite help, secretary, etc …)

CONFERENCE

- deliver content, interact with participants
- gather feedback (SurveyMonkey tool)

POST-CONFERENCE

- send a detailed report to the Executive board
- analyze feedback
- compute actual costs
- add participants names to grid-comm@opensciencegrid.org mailing list for further collaboration
- identify good follow-up cases (potential success cases) and establish communication and plan of work (might include Engagement team and other people in OSG, depending on the case)

Appendix A -- Sample preliminary talk

Issues to discuss:

- decide location (usually a site or university that has had previous OSG collaborations)
- dates (to avoid: breaks, exam weeks, holidays, weekends); usually target Wednesday-Friday ranges
- size and audience (around 40 people from the organizing and neighboring states)
- logistics and finances
    - workshop fees (none for students)
    - arrangements and budgets for meals

  Eg: we charged $25-50 per person for the workshop and a social dinner. Both of these were free to students, and we only charged researchers and faculty
    - OSG covered about 2/3 of the cost
    - we "charged" a "refundable deposit" for students to discourage "no shows" (in the end we did not charge the students).

    - arrangements for hotel (rates and block of rooms)
    - funds to be contributed by each organization
- lists to send calls-for-participation (get the local organizer involved in dissemination of information and bringing registrants)
- facilities (room and computers)
  - room(s), projectors, screens
  - network access
  - computing environment (laptops, desktops)
- allocation of workshop seats (local vs out-of-towners)
- staff (OSG provides 1-3 speakers which can serve as lab conductors as well; ideally the local institution will provide some human resources as well).

Appendix B – Call For Participation CFP announcement template

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JOIN US for an exciting 3-day course in large-scale and high-performance grid computing to take place on January 23-25, 2008, at Florida International University's Wolfsonian Museum. The Wolfsonian Museum is located in the heart of historic Miami Beach, within easy walking distance of the world-famous Art Deco District in South Beach.

This intensive course introduces the techniques of grid and distributed computing for science and engineering fields, with hands-on training in the use of national grid computing resources.

The grid school introduces essential skills that will be needed by researchers in the natural and applied sciences, engineering, and computer science to conduct and support large-scale computation and data analysis in emerging grid and distributed computing environments.

Course participants will work with leading experts in grid computing. The training will focus on enabling the use of national cyberinfrastructure -
Open Science Grid and TeraGrid - to perform large-scale computations and data-intensive processing various application fields of research.
Participants will learn to use grids of thousands of processors and will be able to continue to use these resources for their research after the workshop.

The workshop will cover:

* Overview of distributed computing concepts and tools
* Wide-area high speed optical networking
* Concepts, tools, and techniques of grid computing
* Discovering and using grid resources
* Grid scheduling and distributed data management
* Web service and grid service concepts
* Techniques for workflow and collaboration

Undergraduate and graduate students, researchers, educators and professionals in engineering, computer science, or any scientific, data-or computing-intensive discipline may apply. Applicants should have at least intermediate programming skills (one to two semesters experience in C/C++, Java, Perl, and/or Python) and hands-on experience with UNIX / Linux in a networked environment.

For information on FIGS'08 please visit www.opensciencegrid.org/workshop or send a message to figs08@opensciencegrid.org

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