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Deliverable D2.6

Supporting an e-Infrastructure Event

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Abstract

DI4R 2017 was held in Brussels on 30 November and 1 December 2017, jointly organised by the key e-infrastructures EGI, EUDAT, GÉANT, OpenAIRE, PRACE and RDA Europe. This report provides a summary overview of the event's organisation and results.

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1 Introduction

The 2017 Digital Infrastructures for Research (DI4R 2017) conference is the second edition in the DI4R series [[DI4R](#)], following the successful DI4R 2016 (which was held in Krakow in September 2016). DI4R 2017 was held in Brussels on 30 November and 1 December 2017, and was jointly organised by the key e-infrastructures EGI, EUDAT, GÉANT, OpenAIRE, PRACE and RDA Europe [[DI4R 2017](#)].

2 Goals/Purpose

The overall aim of the conference was to showcase the existing e-infrastructure and services offered to researchers and research infrastructures, to demonstrate how the building blocks for a shared e-infrastructure are already in place, and how they would benefit from further federation and integration in order to provide a uniform environment for the R&E community at a European level. The conference sessions and workshops aimed to facilitate discussion, gather requirements and ensure that the e-infrastructures are working together to achieve this.

The conference program centred around six main topics:

- **Interoperability**
- **Data science and skills**
- **Impact evaluation and metrics**
- **Security trust and identity**
- **The EOSC and EDI building blocks**
- **Business models, sustainability and policies**

3 Audience

The conference targeted researchers, developers and service providers as well as those involved with the e-infrastructures themselves. DI4R 2017 recorded strong interest from this audience, with over 400 registrations, and 382 attendees present.

The EOSCpilot Stakeholder Forum [[EOSCpilot](#)], which attracted approximately 300 attendees, was co-located at the conference venue, and joint signage and conference bags ensured that DI4R 2017 was also promoted among attendees at this event. However, no data is currently available on the amount of overlap of attendance at the two events.

4 Logistics and Setup

The conference was held in Brussels, at the SQUARE meeting centre [[SQUARE](#)], and co-located with the EOSCpilot Stakeholder Forum [[EOSCpilot](#)]. It was jointly organised by EGI, EUDAT, GÉANT, OpenAIRE, PRACE and RDA Europe, with each organisation contributing funding and personnel and participating in the Programme Committee (PC) and the Organising Committee (OC).

Following a call for proposals, the PC selected from more than 140 submissions to design a full programme including over 25 sessions, 40 posters and five interactive demos.

The OC handled logistics and event planning.



Figure 4.1: DI4R 2017 banner

A joint booth with the key e-infrastructures EGI, EUDAT, GÉANT, OpenAIRE, PRACE and RDA Europe was set up by GÉANT, using panels from the joint e-infrastructure booth at TNC17 and posters updated for the purpose by each partner. Each partner took turns at the booth.

The joint event signage and attendee conference bags arranged with the co-located EOSCpilot event helped ensure cost efficiencies and promote greater awareness of both events.

The venue proved to be well chosen, offering the right amount of space, a good range of room options, a central reception and poster area, as well as an excellent Wi-Fi connection.

5 Results and Feedback

The conference took place over two days, with successful outreach driving over 400 online registrations, with 382 participants joining on the days. Keynotes and presentations were well received, with a post-event survey showing high levels of satisfaction. Of the survey responses:

- 75% rated the overall conference very positive or positive.
- 75% rated the sessions and talks very positive or positive.
- 55% considered it essential, and over 35% considered it beneficial, to have all e-infrastructures represented in one joint conference.

Some feedback was received that highlighted the downsides of co-locating events: there was a feeling of discussions being repeated too many times during the week. However this obviously was not mentioned by participants who only attended DI4R. In future, it may be worth investigating merging the two events, or looking at other options for streamlining.

It was felt by all involved that strong progress had been made from the inaugural DI4R 2016 event, with a much more integrated presence from all partners. Efforts were underway immediately after the event to ensure this approach continued. It was arranged to have the joint e-infrastructures booth displaying copies of the CONNECT 27 magazine set up at the EUDAT conference to be held in Porto in January 2018. An e-infrastructure communications working group has also been proposed to ensure regular collaborative and coordinated outreach and messaging on an ongoing basis.

6 Outreach

The OC handled communications and outreach activities prior to, during and after the event.

Regular calls with the OC members took place in the months leading up to the event to jointly plan and action tasks, with meetings chaired on a revolving basis by each of the partners.

Communications channels included the DI4R website [[DI4R](#)], social media accounts, and a dedicated email campaign. Each partner also promoted the event through their own channels, including referrals to all partners to ensure a collaborative approach. Messaging, news items and banners were created for use by all partners to facilitate this.

GÉANT also produced a preview article on DI4R in CONNECT 26 [[CONNECT 26](#)]. A DI4R cover and feature section was also published in CONNECT 27 in time for the event, with contributions invited from all partners [[CONNECT 27](#)]. The section also included keynote speaker interviews, and feature articles on the Human Brain Project and EOSC, which both featured in keynotes and sessions throughout the conference.

A social media campaign ran throughout the event, with questions for speakers submitted via Twitter, and on-site video footage recorded (for future promotional material). The social media campaign was considered to be successful, with around 90k impressions in the three months up to and including the event.

A further review article is planned to be published in CONNECT 28.

7 Conclusions and Next Steps

A follow-up conference call took place in the days after the event to review its progress and identify any areas for improvement. Whilst the event overall was unanimously considered to be a success, several areas for further improvement were highlighted. For example:

- Closer collaboration should take place between the PC and OC.
- PC decision-making should be quicker, as on some occasions late decision-making has led to challenges for the OC. In particular, earlier publishing of the programme would have improved the registration process and provided a wider window.
- The selection process for the programme should be more transparent and it should be ensured that those turned down are notified in the most effective and sensitive way.
- Live streaming of keynote sessions should be looked into.
- The DI4R website and the DI4R registration site were too obviously ‘separate’ and ways to make the transition between them more seamless investigated.

Overall, however, the event was considered to be a success, and discussions are now underway on a potential follow-up DI4R 2018 event. Ongoing work is planned by the OC, potentially in the form of a joint e-infrastructure communications working group.

References

[CONNECT_26]	https://issuu.com/geantpublish/docs/connect_26_web_final/22
[CONNECT_27]	https://www.geant.org/News_and_Events/CONNECT/Documents/CONNECT27_web.pdf
[DI4R]	https://www.digitalinfrastructures.eu/
[DI4R_2017]	https://www.geant.org/News_and_Events/Events/DI4R/Pages/home.aspx
[EOSCpilot]	https://eoscpilot.eu/events/eosc-stakeholder-forum-shaping-future-eosc
[SQUARE]	http://squarebrussels.com/en/

Glossary

DI4R	Digital Infrastructures for Research
EOSC	European Open Science Cloud
OC	Organising Committee
PC	Programme Committee