MXCuBE developers' meeting
25 August 2021

Participants:

- Marcus Oscarsson, Antonia Beteva, Jean-Baptiste Florial (ESRF)

- Meghdad Yazdi (MAX IV)

- Jordi Andreu (ALBA).

- Rasmus Fogh (Global Phasing)

- Ivars Karpics, (EMBL Hamburg)

- Michael Hellmig (HZB)

- 'Boyt' (NSRRC)

    Apologies: Lais do Carmo (LNLS)

Minutes: Rasmus

Site status

Site status reports are now optional.
RF reported concentrating on MXCuBE3, particularly integration with MASSIF-1.
MY raised the question who is adapting to mxcubecore. MO reported that ID29 (planned start date Summer 2022) would be using the mxcubecore integrated version, with tests on other beamlines before then. MY raised a problem with state handling in actuators, which was deferred to private discussion with AB.

Review of current PR guidelines

AB raised the issue of guidelines for making PRs. It was reinforced that PRs should be as small as possible to facilitate review. For API changes the point should be raised in an issue and discussed before appearing in a PR. Currently two approving reviews are needed for merging a PR; this is recommended (but not mandatory) also for PRs that affect only beamline-specific code. It is recommended that PRs be commented and started with an introduction, to facilitate review; particularly controversial points should be dealt with beforehand, in an Issue. Submitters may propose reviewers to speed up the process. MO

proposed that in the future we might move to a model where it was the submitter who merged a PR, once two approvals were given.

Managing site-specific dependencies

The point had been raised by LdC. It was agreed that common dependencies should be in the requirements file for the mock installation, whereas dependencies that were not universal (e.g. Tango) should be in specific requirements files, to avoid triggering unnecessary installations. Names of the additional files might be e.g. requirements-EPICS.txt.
It was agreed that the point should be taken up in an Issue (**ACTION: ???**), particularly to look at how to implement this with the packaging. The issue should also look at pinning versions, to avoid surprises and incompatibilities when upgrading to newer versions.

Rename of mxcube → mxcubeqt

Raised by MO. The renaming of the mxcube repository to mxcubeqt has had the effect of breaking external links to the mxcube.github.io/mxcube, which contains records of past meetings, developers' meetings, etc. It was agreed to move these things (and only these) back to a repository named mxcube, to preserve continuity.

GitHub "Discussions"

MO raised the question whether we should continue to use github 'Discussions'. It was agreed (proposal AB, seconded IK) to discontinue this, so that all discussion could be found in a single location, under Issues.

Practical of release procedure

JA summarised his proposal on release procedures, and went over the detailed presentation he had already made available at https://github.com/jordiandreu/test_action. The proposal is based on the well-known gitflow workflow, with immortal branches development (for new work) and main (tracking official releases), and further short-lived branches for new features, release candidates for pre-release testing, and hotfixes for bugs in released code. For the main (release) branch the version number will be explicitly included in the code, and is increased with bumpversion; this requires an additional merge to incorporate the version number increase. For release candidates and the development branch numbers are handled by a github action, which for each PR accepted automatically increases an additional tag, e.g. from 1.0.17.rc1 to 1.0.17.rc2, or 1.0.133.dev5 to 1.0.133.dev6. JA's published proposal includes detailed procedures, and there is a repository set up on these lines. JA emphasizes

that this is only a proposal and open for change, but there is much satisfaction from the meeting and no suggestions for making changes.

The meeting agrees that we should make a clone of JA's repository in the main mxcube location, which can be shared among people trying this out. After some discussion it is unclear whether the new approach will require all PRs to be made from the main fork rather than individual forks, but if so this is considered an acceptable cost. RF raised the question what would be the place in the repositories and branch system for local production branches, which might be different from (and even incompatible with) the main and develop branch both, created in conditions of urgency and hurry, and possibly quite long-lived. The consensus is that such branches should be kept outside the branch system shown here. All external coding should rely on the API as defined in the main branch, and it should be expected that any problem-causing discrepancies would be handled by the local beamline.

Issue cleanup

This is too time-consuming to be dealt with during the meeting, but developers are encouraged to go through existing issues and resolve as many as possible.

Any Other Business

It is noted that we are just about at the point where the more restrictive procedures for API-breaking changes (raise in issues beforehand, approval by developers' meeting) should come into force

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the end of September; MO to make a Doodle poll.