Best practices guide for organizing an event between NCCs.

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Contents

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1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1.- Purpose of the guide.

This guide of good practices aims to be a guiding instrument to facilitate the effective organization of an in-person event that brings together members of different NCCs of the EuroCC project.

This guide aims to be a clear, practical, and comprehensive roadmap that establishes everything from strategic planning to the execution and evaluation of the in-person event, allowing task leaders from different countries to coordinate efficiently and more effectively achieve the objectives of their task within the project.

1.2.- Context of the EuroCC project and the hearing (task leaders from different countries).

Given that the project is a pan-European collaboration focused on the development and use of advanced supercomputing technologies, with the goal of promoting scientific and technological research, we can find a variety of profiles among its members, who will be the attendees of these events.

To achieve the project's ultimate goal, coordination and cooperation at the regional and national levels are essential, promoting a solid and homogeneous knowledge base.

To this end, throughout the development of the project, multiple workshops have been held to bring together different managers of the various tasks in which the project has been organized, from research centers and universities in various European countries.

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1.3.- Importance of communication in the context of the European project..

In a European context where cultural and linguistic diversity is the norm, ensuring clear, continuous, and effective communication among partners is crucial.Communication allows not only the smooth transfer of technical information but also strategic alignment and the integration of different national perspectives. Additionally, it is essential for meeting the European Union's requirements and standards for transparency and reporting.

2. DEFINITION OF THE EVENT'S KEY POINTS

The first step in organizing an event of this nature is to determine the following sections.

2.1.- Event objectives.

2.1.1.- General and specific objectives of the in-person event (e.g., sharing knowledge, aligning communication strategies, strengthening networks).

Practically the first thing to do is to define the main objective of the event:

- Facilitate the exchange of technical knowledge and preliminary results to accelerate scientific progress.
- Align communication strategies among all partners to maintain consistency in project promotion and results.
- Strengthen the network of personal and professional contacts, creating synergies that favor long-term collaborations.
- Foster open discussions about challenges, facilitating joint solutions.

This section will be of great importance, as the different activities of the event will be developed based on the objective we have.

2.1.2.- Justification of the event within the project framework and its benefits.

Holding an in-person event provides a unique environment for direct interaction, which cannot be fully replicated through virtual platforms. This personal contact, in addition to the specific objectives of the event itself, fosters trust, quick conflict resolution, and active engagement from the partners. Additionally, it improves the visibility of the project and reinforces its impact on the scientific community and the European public.

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2.2.-Target audience and attendees.

2.2.1.- Profile of the attending task leaders (roles, countries, experience).

Once the objectives of the event have been defined, it will be necessary to determine the profile of the attendees who should attend in order to achieve these previously established objectives.

When considering potential attendees, the task leaders for the task in relation to which the meeting will be held should be taken into account first, as they will a priori have the most information and knowledge about the task within each NCC. Additionally, if capacity allows, the assistance of other technicians may be available.

2.2.2.- Estimated number of participants.

It is necessary to make an approximate estimate of the maximum number of attendees that can be accommodated and, based on that, define the invitations to be made, adapt the activities, as well as the necessary resources.

If necessary, the number of attendees may be limited, setting a maximum of representatives per NCC.

2.2.3.- Intercultural and linguistic considerations (languages, translations).

It is essential that the event designates English as the official language for presentations and discussions, as well as for the submission of prior and subsequent information.Depending on the needs, simultaneous translation or additional language support can be arranged. It is recommended to raise awareness among participants about cultural differences and promote an inclusive and respectful environment, avoiding technical terms or jargon that may hinder understanding.

2.3. Logistics and organization.

2.3.1.- Date, duration, and location of the event.

- The choice of date should take into account the availability of the majority of the partners and avoid conflicts with national holidays.
- The ideal duration is one to two days to maximize effectiveness without generating fatigue.
- The preferred location is the headquarters of one of the partners with adequate infrastructure, accessible, and with technical facilities.

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2.3.2.- Agenda and daily structure: thematic blocks, assigned times.

The agenda should be structured into thematic blocks related to each area of the project, including:

- Sessions of presentations and talks (each with controlled time).
- Panel discussions to discuss specific problems.
- Networking and break time.
- Practical workshops or collaborative work sessions.
- Cultural activities to get to know the center where the meeting will take place, as well as the city.

It is recommended to include some more relaxed space or activity, which allows attendees to get to know each other and identify which NCC they belong to.

2.3.3.- Necessary technical and audiovisual resources.

Once the agenda and activities have been finalized, the necessary technical, audiovisual, and personnel resources must be defined so that all the scheduled activities can be carried out properly.Therefore, the following resources will need to be defined:

- Equipment for projection and sound.
- Stable internet connection with sufficient capacity to support video conferencing if there are remote participants.
- Rooms adapted for group work and interactive dynamics.
- Equipment for simultaneous translation if additional languages are to be used.

2.3.4.- Suppliers and support (catering, audiovisual, reception).

Once the above point has been defined, it is necessary to determine which of the resources that will be needed are available internally and which will need to be outsourced or contracted.

- Hire catering services that take into account cultural preferences and dietary restrictions.
- Hire permanent technical support during the event to resolve technological issues.
- Receptionists or on-site coordinators who support general logistics.
- Specialized animators.
- Book tickets for cultural activities that can be performed in English.

In the event that we have internal resources, they must be managed and reserved with sufficient advance notice to ensure their full availability and operation on the day of the event.

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2.4. Program and content.

2.4.1.- Central themes and messages to communicate.

The theme and content will logically be in line with the main objective of the event and the task it is part of.At this point, it is relevant to know the profile of the attendees and determine whether the content will be more technical and specific or more general. Since it should be in line with the profile of the attendees.

Some examples may be:

- Recent advances in high-performance computing (HPC).
- Scientific applications specific to project areas.
- Strategies for effective communication and dissemination of results.
- Challenges and opportunities for joint cooperation.
- AI tools useful for the specific task.
- Difficulties and improvements that have arisen within the task.
- Improvement proposals.

2.4.2.- Presentations, workshops, or round tables.

- Invitation to experts for keynote presentations.
- Workshops focused on practical problems or tools used by participants.
- Roundtables with active participation for debate and decision-making.

2.4.3.- Speakers, moderators, and roles.

It may be interesting to have external assistants to the project who can raise different points of view or contribute specific knowledge in the subject.

In this sense, it is recommended that:

- Previous identification of speakers with a clear definition of topics.
- Moderators trained to keep the conversation on track and encourage dialogue.
- Coordinators for each session to ensure smoothness.

2.4.4.- Participatory dynamics and activities to foster interaction.

It is recommended to include some participatory activities that encourage interaction among all attendees. Some suggestions are:

- Using methods such as "world café" or brainstorming to encourage participation.
- Spaces dedicated to networking for informal exchange.
- Team activities to promote interdisciplinary collaboration.

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2.4.5.- Cultural activities.

Given that attendees will come from different countries and cultures, it is recommended to include an optional cultural activity in the program to introduce the center where the meeting will take place, as well as the city and culture of the country.

If deemed inappropriate or time is insufficient, it is advisable to provide attendees with information about various cultural activities of interest taking place in the city so that they can attend during their free time if they wish.

2.4.6.- Horarios de la jornada.

As for setting the start and end times of the event, keep in mind that since many attendees will have traveled a long way, it is recommended not to start the day too early or end it too late. So that you can facilitate travel and rest times.

Also, keep in mind that the usual meal or rest times are not the same in all countries, so it is recommended to try to adapt as much as possible to all attendees by implementing intermediate schedules that adjust as much as possible to the attendees.

It is recommended to leave some buffer time at the beginning and end of the day, as there are usually delays and unforeseen events at the start, which could throw off the rest of the schedule. Therefore, a margin of approximately half an hour should be left for the reception of the attendees.

Additionally, throughout the day, there tends to be a buildup of small delays in the timings, which can cause the day to end later than expected on the agenda, so leaving prudent margins will help ensure that in the event of unforeseen events and delays, it does not affect the organization too much.

Finally, it is advisable to implement some breaks in the middle of the morning and afternoon, with some coffee so that the attendees can clear their minds and face the entire event with the right energy and concentration.

3. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

3.1.- Strategy for informing attendees before, during, and after the event.

Although the most suitable means of communication is an invitation, it is recommended to announce the event informally before sending the official invitation. This will allow us to gauge the interest of the attendees and even gather some useful suggestions to consider before closing the program.

The invitations should inform about the following:

- Date and location of the event.
- Theme and profile of attendees.

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- In case there are maximum attendance limits, it is also recommended to indicate this.
- Set a maximum date to confirm attendance.
- Include contact information for the organizers to resolve any questions they may have.
- Useful information regarding: the exact location of the event, transportation options, nearby accommodations, restaurants, or other useful information.
- Include a registration method or form that facilitates the control of registrants.
- Ask about specific requirements such as food intolerances or other relevant information.

Invitations should be sent out well in advance to allow attendees to organize themselves both professionally and make reservations or purchases with a reasonable margin.

- Sending invitations and an agenda well in advance.
- Pre-registration reminders and support for registration and logistics.
- Communication during the event with updates and materials.
- Post-event follow-up with summary and feedback.

3.2.- Channels and media to be used.

Depending on the attendees and their proximity, the most suitable channel should be chosen:

- Email for formal communication.

- Project collaborative platform (intranet, Teams, Slack).

- Professional social networks for external dissemination.

3.3.- Support materials (presentations, brochures, guides).

In addition to the communication of the event itself, other types of informative, interesting documents must be defined, such as:

- Digital and physical presentations.
- Information brochures about the project and the event.
- Practical guides for the use of technological infrastructure.
- Merchandising to be given to attendees.

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4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the activities to be carried out are clear, it will be necessary to determine which individuals will be in charge of and/or responsible for coordinating them and ensuring their proper execution. For this, the following must be determined:

4.1.- Assignment of tasks among the organizing team..

- General coordinator who oversees all phases.
- Logistics manager for venue management, catering, and transportation.
- Technical manager for audiovisual resources and connectivity.
- Communications manager for dissemination and participant support.

4.2.- Responsible for each activity or resource.

- Assign specific individuals to each block of the program.
- Event and speaker guest services manager.
- Support team for handling unexpected events.

4.3.- Key contacts and communication protocols during the evento.

- List shared with direct contacts of organizers and support.
- Protocols for quickly resolving technical or logistical issues.
- Direct channels for emergency communication.

5. EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Once the event day arrives, as well as once it is finished, we must gather opinions and data that will allow us to evaluate the effectiveness and fulfillment of the objectives of the event previously established. To do this, it is recommended to gather and analyze the following data to be able to make a realistic evaluation of the success of the same.

5.1.- Success indicators (KPIs): attendance, participation, satisfaction..

- Total number of attendees and percentage of guests.
- Level of participation in sessions and dynamics.
- Satisfaction index collected through surveys.

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5.2.- Methods for collecting feedback (surveys, interviews).

- Digital surveys sent immediately after the event.
- Interviews or focus groups with key participants.
- Analysis of comments on a collaborative platform.

5.3.- Plan to analyze results and apply improvements in future editions.

- Internal review of the collected data.
- Preparing a report with recommendations for future events.
- Incorporating suggestions into the planning and execution of upcoming meetings to improve efficiency and satisfaction.

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