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Building Bridges between China & Europe

As part of my plan to explore international co-operation on grids, I had an enlightening chat with Gilbert Kalb, a senior scientist at Fraunhofer Gesellschaft in the Department for International Business Development. The interview helped shed new light on grid-enabled applications, interoperability and standards from an international perspective.

Gilbert currently manages Bridge, an EU funded project that connects EU and Chinese commercial & research organisations across several domains: simulation and design in aerospace industries; environmental disaster prediction; and drug discovery.

Gilbert, can you highlight a few key achievements of the Bridge project?

Bridge has achieved interoperability between major EU (GRIA) and Chinese (CNGrid GOS) middleware. We have set up a platform for supporting applications and adopted a gateway with a high-level service based workflow approach to implement interoperability. Bridge has developed key technologies in both Grid middleware and in applications, including gateway-based interoperability, Master/Worker parallel programming model for grid computing, cross domain security policies mapping, and reliable massive data transfer.

The three applications all have different features, which in themselves bring a number of challenges: inter-continental workflow for optimisation; massive data transfer and processing for meteorological applications, and massive parallel computation for drug discovery. The key point is that they have all demonstrated the feasibility of Grid-enabled applications.

China has invested heavily in Grid research and in Grid

Welcome to the OGF23 GridCast

More than 500 delegates have packed their bags and descended upon Barcelona, Spain, to argue, celebrate, map out and push forward the progress of grid computing. Watch this space for all the latest from the OGF23 conference floor!

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infrastructure. It has not only a large market but can also offer great opportunities for research co-operation. What new experiences and knowledge have emerged from EU-China partnerships?

It is quite challenging to manage a project with partners from across Europe and China. We have to tackle not just technical problems, but also different time zones as partners operate tens of thousands of kilometres away. Technical issues tackled include providing partners with a seamless, efficient, reliable and affordable IT infrastructure, as well as full control of the usage of provided services and protection of intellectual property rights (IPR). In addition to these challenges, there are cultural differences and the need to communicate in a language that is often not our own. But it is an interesting and valuable experience that has brought tangible results. We can now expect to see an increasing need to support large design and engineering projects on a global scale. My personal experience shows that all the partners and people involved in Bridge are prepared to go the extra mile: the recipe for success in an intercontinental research project. The strong relations established are paving the ground for further co-operation and have helped identify a number of potential partners from the aviation industry in China and the pharmaceutical industry.

What has been the value-add of attending OGF23?

OGF23 is an opportunity to demonstrate the findings of Bridge to a knowledgeable audience and discuss the various facets of the project with other people from the community. This kind of event also helps us understand the different stages of development and where we stand in the global community. Last but not least, this is a chance to network, make new contacts and pinpoint potential co-operations within Bridge.

How do you plan to engage with OGF over the coming months?

We are planning to make a contribution to standards in interoperability and grid-enabled application technologies by taking part in a number of international activities, including OGF working group activities.

Posted by Stephanie Parker at [11:11 AM](#) Labels: [international co-operation](#), [interoperability](#), [standards](#)

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