

Executive summary of the 37th PRACE aisbl Council Meeting

The 37th meeting of the PRACE aisbl Council took place as a videoconference via Zoom on 17 June 2020.

In regard to the ongoing action about PRACE aisbl producing a short communication in order to stress the need for increased user support and software development for exascale, it was suggested that at the next SWG there should be a coming together of representatives from the SSC and IAC are coming together to discuss. Florian Berberich will propose a first draft of the document for communication purposes to be discussed.

Florian Berberich announced that the PRACE web page is completely renewed and invited the audience to visit the page. He also adds that the tasks and objectives of PRACE can be included on the web.

Janne Ignatius was elected as the new PRACE Council Chair for a period of two years, while Philippe Lavocat was elected as the new PRACE Council Vice-Chair for a period of two years.

Florian Berberich presented the annual accounts. The documents were still in a draft version and Florian hesitated to share them since he received them only a few days before the meeting. He had been through them with the accountant and mentioned they were in good order. In terms of membership fees, PRACE is not anticipating cash flow problems for 2021.

The proposed candidate for the new PRACE Operations Director is Florian Berberich, who was asked to temporarily leave the virtual meeting. It was agreed among those present that he was a suitable candidate with the right competencies and experience, and the council acknowledged the decision to select him. It also reappointed him as a member of the Board of Directors.

A discussion about the format of the Board of Directors took place. The idea that the Board of Directors should become just two people – Serge Bogaerts and Florian Berberich – and that the rest of the members would be appointed to a new Advisory Group was discussed. In the end, it was decided that the compensation of the other board members (Maria Grazia Giuffreda, Oriol Pineda, Matej Praprotnik, Philippe Segers and Debora Testi), would be removed, but that the SWG would have to decide in the future the Terms of Reference for the new Advisory Group before it was formed. It was also noted that the appointment of Dr Berberich and the transformation of the Board of Directors would not increase the personnel budget of PRACE aisbl.

Regarding the future of PRACE in the EuroHPC era, Florian Berberich reported that feedback from the French ministry stressed the role of PRACE as scientific advisor, and that its training activities should continue. Thomas Lippert reported from his high-level meetings with EuroHPC that the major issue that needs to be addressed is the access scheme. A joint working group is in place and the following needs to be worked out: development of PRACE funding scenarios for 2021 including PRACE-6IP, and funding scenarios beyond 2021.

Lee Margetts gave an update on the Industrial Advisory Committee (IAC). The last IAC meeting took place just after the lock down on 26 March by WebEx. It focused on updates from various leaders from the PRACE-6IP project regarding industrial activity. Two other meetings have taken place as well, the first between SHAPE & IAC to discuss how to cater to the needs of a Portuguese plastic manufacturing trade association that had expressed interest, and the second with ETP4HPC who invited the IAC to talk about communications with EuroHPC. Lee Margetts was pleased to report that the industrial engagement is increasing, highlighting the importance of the PRACE Industry Officer.



Florian Berberich gave an update substituting the Managing Director. In terms of COVID-19 activity zoom webinars for all project leaders from the US (HPC Consortium) and PRACE to discuss ideas and exchange data have been organised. Participants present their projects to encourage collaboration from both sides of the border, to avoid duplication of work and to share data in an open way.

Oriol Pineda presents the status of the HLST programme. The programme has been extended for an additional year. The funding for this extension has been confirmed.