Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting
13 January, 2021
Teleconference: Cisco Webex

SC members present:
Benedict Rogers, University of Manchester, UK (Chair)
Stefano Sibilla, Università di Pavia, Italy (Secretary)
Renato Vacondio, Università di Parma, Italy (Newsletter Editor)
Angelo Tafuni, New Jersey Institute of Technology, USA (Webmaster)
Salvatore Marrone, CNR-INM, Italy (Benchmark Supervisor)
Xiangyu Hu, Technische Universität München, Germany
Antonio Souto-Iglesias, Universidad Politecnica de Madrid, Spain
Nathan Quinlan, NUI Galway, Ireland
Abbas Khayyer, Kyoto University, Japan
Pierre Sabrowski, Dive Solutions GmbH, Germany

Also present:
Giuseppe Bilotta, INGV, Italy

Apologies:
David Le Touzé, École Centrale de Nantes, France
Alex Crespo, Universidade de Vigo, Spain
Matthieu de Leffe, Nextflow Software, France
Rade Vignjevic, Brunel University, UK

Update on New York 2021 SPHERIC workshop

1. *Platform*

Angelo Tafuni presents various options of platforms/environments where the workshop may be organized:

i. Bravura VIRTUAL environment, which allows to manage efficiently virtual sessions (if needed, also in parallel), allows for a large number of attendees (requested up to 300); networking sessions for discussions are available. The cost for software & services is $ 17.900,00.

ii. Virtway platform. Attendees are virtually present as avatars. Same spaces as Bravura: virtual rooms, meeting spaces, exhibition spaces, private meeting rooms. Gaming technology for interaction. Streaming broadcasts, connecting to thousands of users. Cost estimate for the workshop $ 30.765,00.

iii. Webex Events.

Renato Vacondio underlines the need of having a platform which is both sustainable from a financial point of view and easy to run on different platforms (Windows, Linux, Mac).

Salvatore Marrone notes that Webex suffers a lot of problems in Linux environments, and suggests checking its viability before taking it into consideration.

2. Registration fee

The possible registration fee for the conference, considering that there are no travel expenses for the attendees, could be around 75-90 $. Ben Rogers suggests in any case to limit the fee to a maximum of 99 $.

3. Format

Renato Vacondio suggests giving the presentations in streaming and recording every session in a single video, making it available for the following days to people who are unable to connect in streaming due to time zones and/or connection problems.

Ben Rogers suggests having a meeting space where people can meet, exchange opinions and experiences. In Angelo Tafuni's opinion, Bravura should offer this option.

The Panel Discussion theme will be on the coupling of SPH with other methods. Salvatore Marrone notes that the option of having an interacting panel discussion can be implemented within the Bravura platform (if this one will be eventually chosen).

Consdering the session format, Giuseppe Bilotta reports the example of EGU, where the talks were uploaded first and then, during the session, there was a 3-4 minute space for each Author and a final question time.

Antonio Souto-Iglesias suggests instead to maintain the usual format of the spheric Workshops, pre-recording the presentations and streaming them in succession, avoiding however final panel discussion and the question time at the end of each presentation. In this way, 12 minutes may be allocated for each-recorded presentation + 3 minutes for questions + 1 or 2 minutes for technical issues; 5 final minutes would be available for the conclusions.

Daniel and Xjangyu Hu confirm that they can give the two talks on the morning of the training day. For the practical session, Renato Vacondio notes that two options are available: either people will run the simulations on their own laptop or a virtual machine may be set up; however, Ben Rogers point out that the simultaneous connection of many people to a virtual machine may give problems.

Another SC meeting to update on the Workshop organization will be scheduled on February 10, at 3 PM.