



## **OPAALS PROJECT**

Contract n° IST- 034824

### **WP10: Sustainable Community Building**

**D10.1 – The design and organisation of plenary sessions, workshops and Summer/Winter schools based on an on-going process of mapping network interactions**



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This brief report describes the events already held during the first year of the project, the events planned for M13-18, and some of the events in the period M19-24.

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## Events for Research Roadmap Definition

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

According to the description of work, “Events for research roadmap definition” (Task 10.2) combines both operational and research-led activities involved in the design and organisation of events. Different types of events have been envisaged in the project with the aim to encourage interaction amongst the partners in OPAALS’ Network of Excellence and to catalyse new relationships and ideas across the network. The events include: Plenary meetings intended to foster mutual awareness and connectivity within the network; workshops intended to encourage focus on particular research themes; and ‘winter schools’ intended to allow members of the network to draw on researchers from within as well as outside the network to collaborate on existing ideas, contribute to network enlargement and foster new research directions.

The different events, as outlined in Figure 1, uncover three level interaction and communication in OPAALS’ community building process.

## **2.0 TYPES OF EVENTS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 Major events**

Major events are an opportunity for first level of interaction. This is focused around the ability of the partners to communicate progress in developing their specific research and achievements within the workpackages. This occurs mainly during the plenary sections. There have been 2 plenary sessions so far one in Tampere, on 10-11 October 2006, and in Kassel, 19-22 March 2007.

The Tampere meeting’s overarching theme was integration. The meeting aimed to gather input (suggestions, comments, etc.), and to develop a common understanding of OPAALS’ Open Knowledge Space (OKS), which is central to OPAALS’ community building process. This was also an opportunity to convene on appropriate tools in enabling the visualisation and overall management of the OKS.

The Kassel meeting largely emphasized social science. It explored central themes to the social science domain, namely:

- Social Science Domain
- Community Building, Networks & Communication
- Computer Science Domain
- Natural Science Domain
- SBVR / BML & Language
- Open Knowledge Space (Architecture, tools and visualisation)
- Visualisation & Language Patterns
- Open Source Systems & Community Networks
- Collaborative Tools, Community Building & Language
- P2P Networks & Transaction Models
- Biocomputing
- Accountability & Trust

It was an opportunity for partners to update each other on their research progress, and to identify common topics and synergies.

## 2.2 Bilateral and multilateral events

Multilateral events, such as workshops are an opportunity for partners to interact in order to update each other on their respective progress as well as identify emerging synergies. There are so far 7 workshops planned for Phase I. Each workshop focuses on communicating OPAALS achievements to a wider audience beyond the given consortium. These have the purpose to inform other institutions interested in OPAALS philosophy but also and above all to receive feedback on strengths and weakness of the OPAALS community.

It will be crucial to verify if the research developed has clear targets and can count on all the skills needed to achieve its ultimate targets. It will also be crucial to question if the targets established at the incipit of the projects are still the main focus of the project or if the research have prompted different solutions or objectives. At the workshops colleagues from other disciplines and other institutions or those with different experience and skills can offer new perspectives in order to allow OPAALS to grow and regenerate itself. The following workshop events took place:

The University of Surrey (UniS) hosted a workshop (WPs 3, 4, 5) at Guildford, UK, on 27-28th November 2006. The workshop primarily focused on the P2P network architecture and support for B2B interactions between SME's in the digital ecosystem. The event was consistent with the 6th objective of OPAALS to investigate the most effective peer-to-peer architecture that can support adaptive and learning behaviour of the digital ecosystem. In particular, the work in WP3 aims to provide dynamic network architecture and topology that can efficiently support transaction models of distributed long-lived transactions and address the dimensions of distributed accountability, identity and trust, which are addressed in WP4. The emerging ideas on the most suitable P2P architecture are to be integrated into the digital ecosystem infrastructure (WP5) aiming to support a distributed collaborative environment for SMEs.

The Trento meeting, which took place on January 07 in Trento (WPs 4, 6, 7, 8), centred on community network and explored various conceptualisations of trust in social science. This was followed by the Salzburg workshop which took place on the 15 - 16th February 2007 (WP1, WP2) and aimed to get a clear understanding of the inter linkages between cell biology and computer science. The next meeting will take place in Barcelona on the 26th - 28<sup>th</sup> of June. Technically this meeting will offer the opportunity to have a discussion before the final review ('Pre-review meeting') and to elaborate on a range of high-level topics that make the framework of OPAALS research.

Other planned events include the 1st OPAALS conference in Rome in November 2007, followed by the first winter school in Trento, in March 2008.

**Fig. 1 Overview of Planned Events for Year 1 and Year 2**

Phase I Events	Participants	Themes	J u n e  0 6	J u l y  0 6	A u g . 0 6	S e p t . 0 6	O c t . 0 6	N o v . 0 6	D e c . 0 6	J a n . 0 7	F e b . 0 7	M a r . 0 7	A p r . 0 7	M a y . 0 7	J u n . 0 7	J u l . 0 7	A u g . 0 7	S e p t . 0 7	O c t . 0 7	N o v . 0 7	D e c . 0 7	J a n . 0 8	F e b . 0 8	M a r . 0 8	A p r . 0 8	M a y . 0 8
Kick-off meeting	OPAALS Partners (All)	WP: 0-10																								
Tampere integration workshop	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								
P2P Architecture Workshop	UniS, UniKassel, LSE	WP: 3-5																								
Barcelona OKS	TI, UniKassel, LSE, IPTI	OKS																								
Trento meeting	UniKassel, IITK, LSE, WIT, UL, UNIS, CN	WP:4,6,7, 8																								
Kassel Meeting	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								
OKS Barcelona working meeting	TI, UniS, WIT, LSE,	WP: 3-4																								
Pre-review meeting in Barcelona	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								
Review meeting in Brussels	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								
OPAALS Conference & workshop in Rome	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								
Winter School in Trento	All Partners	WP: 1-10																								

## 2.3 Research integration & exchange through Summer/Winter schools

The third level of interaction is the Winter School. OPAALS has the ambition to develop a new philosophy and to use a network of excellence in order to widen the discipline focused knowledge into a different dimension. The Winter School adds a component of training. This training will be mainly available to those who have already expressed a very strong interest in the OPAALS philosophy and have proven to have some value added for a further development of the project as a whole or in one of its parts. The project will also provide the opportunity to PhD students who are not part of the OPAALS project to take part in the event. The information and content of the programme will be accessible online through the OKS. The training will integrate potential new partners into the depth of the research of specific parts of the WPs with a key perspective at the project as a whole. Potential partners will be able to find out how the community is developing along the lines of sharing an open knowledge at a multidisciplinary level but also how to contribute to the next phase of the project. The OPAALS community building workpackage aims to achieve the enlargement of the consortium either including new disciplines or reinforcing and bridging via a number of tools and strategies the basic key areas. The network of excellence can speculate further development of the community, but be able to communicate the OPAALS philosophy through traditional training will impact a wider community by definition. The Winter schools begin in March 2008.

This is important and necessary in order to strengthen research collaboration in OPAALS, and ensure the sustainability of OPAALS' Network of Excellence as an interdisciplinary research community. It is expected that new research questions will emerge after the initial phase of the project and that this will draw on several academic disciplines straddling the boundaries of the natural, computer and social sciences.

The development of new academic and research traditions will be supported through the programme of post-doctoral and doctoral fellowships which we propose will be a major component of OPAALS in Phase II&III (months 19-48). More specifically, the research integration and exchange will comprise of the following actions:

- The development of new academic and research traditions will be supported through the programme of post-doctoral and doctoral fellowships which we propose will be a major component of OPAALS in Phase II&III (months 19-48).
- During the second phase of the project consortium members will be encouraged to apply to the project for the support of OPAALS research fellowships of between 6-12 weeks to support junior researchers/PhD students' involvement in the research of the network.
- We understand that a barrier to the emergence of research covered by the OPAALS framework is the absence of an extensive literature or specialist 'library' drawing literature from the various academic/research traditions grouped in the OPAALS framework. To this end we will seek to establish an OPAALS library.

### *2.3.1 Research Exchange Process and Mobility Plan*

Since integration is the core part of the integration process within the OPAALS project and one with major impact in terms of integration results, OPAALS has planned a complete process of mobility programmes among project partners. It is based on two main phases.

The first phase is the implementation of Task 10.1 and aims at the creation of OPAALS winter schools for partner students and researchers. This is implemented through the following steps:

- Plenary meetings—to foster mutual awareness and connectivity within the network. These will allow OPAALS partners to establish a code of practice and to pursue the key tasks listed above under Communication and interoperability among OPAALS research activities.
- Workshops—to encourage focus on particular research themes. They can be held during the plenary meetings. In order to achieve the objectives of the project, the workshops may be organised by study groups made of senior and junior researchers located in different partner institutions that develop key themes and tasks. Under the organisation of workshops it will be possible to implement personnel exchange and better integration of partners and workpackages activities.
- Summer/Winter schools—to allow members of the network to draw on researchers from outside the network to collaborate on existing ideas, contribute to network enlargement and foster new research directions. This step is characterised by intensive training programmes. The Summer/Winter schools will also offer the opportunity of creating course packages and historiographical updates which reflect an integrated view of the research developed in the different workpackages of the project.

The second phase is more ambitious and includes a research mobility plan, where researchers coming from one OPAALS partner will move to another OPAALS partner. This plan will be composed by the following steps:

- Implementation of a Matrix-plan of research exchange among OPAALS partners (for researchers and PhD students). In this first step, the OPAALS consortium identifies contiguous fields of research and institutions that can integrate their research activities and the researchers that will travel to ensure that such “contamination process” takes place.
- Operative human resources exchange: An operative and financial plan will be implemented in order to support the organisations and researchers involved in these exchange activities. During this step researchers coming from one university will have research experience within another university of the consortium.
- After the completion of the exchange programme, OPAALS will assess the achievement of the exchange programme. The activities associated with the exchange programme will be monitored by the OPAALS management board and specific analysis of integration activity will be followed by an agreed research report that will be considered the first step in the research integration process.

OPAALS researchers can visit other partner institutions with the OPAALS research exchange programme. As outlined in Tables 2 A - C, partners have already made commitments with regard to the exchange process and mobility plan for researchers.

This exchange is based on the ability of the consortium to identify contiguous fields of research and institutions that can integrate their research activities and the researchers will travel in order to ensure that such “contamination process” takes place.

The exchange is based on a flexible system where researchers can apply for a minimum stay of 2 weeks and a maximum stay of 8 weeks (or 3 months in exceptional cases).



*Table 2 Formal Commitments*

A)

ID	Del Name	Month	Leader
D10.1	The design and organisation of plenary sessions, workshops and Summer Schools	6	LSE
D10.2	A matrix-plan of research experience exchange among OPAALS partners	18	LSE

B)

ID	Milestone name	Month	Leader
M10.1	Schedule of plenary sessions, workshops and Summer Schools for following 12 month period	1	LSE
M10.2	Matrix-plan of research exchange	15	LSE, UNIK
M10.3	Exchange programme outline (research content) based on matrix-plan	17	LSE
M10.4	1 <sup>st</sup> Integration workshop	4	TUT
M10.5	First "summer" school	18	CN

C)

Sharing human resources	PHASE I		PHASE II
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
OPAALS Summer/Winter Schools for partner students, researchers and PhDs	n.a.	N° of participants (>20) N° of training courses (>2) Qualitative information of participants	N° of participants (>30) N° of training courses (>5) Qualitative information of participants
Research mobility plan, where researchers coming from one OPAALS partner will move to another OPAALS partner for outside research phase.	n.a.	n.a.	N° of researchers & students exchanged (>20) Quantitative and qualitative resources used for the human resource exchange

Each researcher with the support of their institution can apply for the exchange following an elaborate procedure for quality control, which includes the submission of the following information to the Coordinator:

1. Role in the OPAALS project
2. A short work plan with:
  - a. A timetable,
  - b. rationale for the exchange and reasons to choose the host institution,
  - c. focus of studies to be developed in the host institution,
  - d. targeted milestones/deliverables of the project.
3. Letter of invitation by the host institution
4. Letter to confirm leave of absence from origin institution (in case of a PhD student, a letter from the supervisor is also needed)

The coordinator will authorise the exchange if the dossier presented fits with the project's needs. The flexibility of the exchanges will allow more people to travel creating a bigger interaction between partners and also more targeted exchanges. The coordinator has the responsibility to monitor the exchanges and report to the management team, so that a high level of fairness and balance of the exchange can be guaranteed.

### **3.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The events are a reflection of the increased interaction between partners, and are at the core of community building. Sessions, workshops and Summer/Winter schools are highly valued by OPAALS community members as an opportunity to advance research as well as to strengthen community building. Although some of the events can be planned in advance, others are arranged as a result of the collaborative research process between partners. A new and exciting tool that OPAALS is developing in order to maximise our communication is the online conferencing. An online conference uses the Internet as a conference venue which means that participants can access the conference from anywhere in the world and can do this at any time, using standard browser software. Partners will be able to log on as little or as much as they wish as they are given a password to access the various conference and seminar groups as well as closed discussion groups. Online conference has lots of advantages:

- cheaper - because there is no travel, and no accommodation required;
- more convenient - you can access it at any time you want, from anywhere with an Internet connection;
- high level of participation - typically, more people will actively participate in an online conference than in a face to face conference, and the standard of the discussions is often higher;
- wider spread of participants
- and there is a permanent record of proceedings.