NMI3 Presses the Start Button

After the successful end of NMI3 in the sixth Framework Program, the new Integrated Infrastructure Initiative for Neutron Scattering and Muon Spectroscopy (NMI3) started at the beginning of February 2009, and had its launch meeting on March 30th to 31st in Villigen, Switzerland. The Paul Scherrer Institut hosted the meeting of 104 attendees and took care of a very smooth and pleasant organization. The NMI3 consortium consists of 21 beneficiaries from 13 countries, including 11 research infrastructures.

We started with four work meetings, setting up the common goals for joint research activities (JRA) of the new NMI3 project with the following topics: detectors, neutron optics, sample environment and muons. The JRA on Deuteration had its meeting beforehand, and the Polarized Neutrons group scheduled a meeting in April. The seven Joint Research Activities focusing on six specific R&D areas will develop techniques and methods for next generation instrumentation. Basically, all European facilities and academic institutions are involved in this process.

Later on, the General Assembly opened with the welcome address of Kurt Clausen as host, and Christian Kurrer, the scientific officer of the European Commission, gave some introductory words. He emphasized the pan-European character of the transnational access that generates a generational identity in similitude with the "Erasmus generation." In fact, in this new project transnational access will be provided by 10 research facilities, representing 1,400 days of beam time over two years. The access representatives presented the new instruments and capabilities that will be offered: the new second target station at ISIS, new instruments at FRMII or specific possibilities in small facilities at the Neutron Physics Laboratory in Rez (Czech Republic).

Miriam Förster, dedicated project manager at the ILL, gave a quick overview on the new rules in FP7 and highlighted the overall ambition and the procedures to comply fully with the contractual obligations.

Helmut Schober (ILL) is in charge of the coordination of this FP7 NMI3 project. He finished his talk, "yes we will," and expressed that the main goal of the management is to further strategic decision-making from a truly European perspective in order to cope with upcoming challenges. The NMI3 consortium has to continue to attract new users and coordinate efforts to propose continuously the best techniques to the users.

As part of this Integrating Activity, dissemination and training actions can apply for additional funding in order to develop and increase the user communities. Furthermore, NMI3 supports networking on Monte Carlo and data analysis in order to share know-how on software development and enhance rationalization and co-development wherever possible. Simulation of new instruments will be beneficial for design and the planning process of future instruments not only for the existing facilities, but also for the new ESS facility.

Ana Claver, Information Manager at the Forschungszentrum Jülich (FZJ) in Germany, presented the information service of the project. The user information service will be adapted to ease the choice of facility and instruments for the different types of experiments. Using software from the former FP6 project, the pathfinder on the Neutron-Muon portal has been set up to facilitate the understanding of the different methods. The user can search with different entry points: field of science, type of experiment and sample environment. NMI3 will pursue this effort with new communication techniques. Please follow these new developments on the Neutron and Muon Portal on our continuously evolving web site: http://neutron.neutron-eu.net/n_nmi3fp7.

A nail-biting moment.

NMI3's objective is to enhance the integration of the distributed facilities in Europe, not only to optimize the use of the existing instruments, but also to target the future development of user needs by relying on strong team work over the next four years.

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