

HPC Workshop @ RSE18

Birmingham 5th September 2018

Topic: “Engagement”

Group leader: Chris Edsall

Scribe:

Reporter: Phineas Fogg

Other participants

- Chris
- Louise Brown
- Mike Mineter
- Mark Dawson

Notes from discussion

“How to raise awareness of RSEs attached to tier 2 locally and increase their input in to projects”

- *Eg. AT Nottingham 50%FTE on T2 but is underutilised. Next quarters’ usage for Nottingham on Mid+ no mention of RSE*

Nottingham (everybody) have hpc-users list - how do we reach the other users?

Mark: “On a local level, T3 -> T1 and other facilities. HOW do we find the users, advertise the service. Users may not give good arguments and may not be running their applications in the best manner. They aren’t aware”

Mike :any examples of good practices? Mike is in Geosciences

In house server , uni cluster (T3) -> T1 (ARCHER, JASMIN). Tried to raise awareness via a wiki advertising compute resources and Mike’s facilitation service and training courses.

Advantage of being based in geosciences (i.e departmental): continuity from one project to another; disciplinary knowledge.

Mark: surprising that even being embedded in a group still gives problems in raising awareness

Mike: due to size and diversity of school, and spread across three buildings.

Researchers and academics are stressed, they feel they don’t have time for extra events, or new ways to work.

Chris - Bristol - advertise RSE help at workshops; email lists of users. We have have an annual survey required to renew HPC account. Attend departmental coffee mornings.

Trad HPC users in eng, physics usually on a better footing (depends on uni, Swansea good, Nottingham, Bristol not so much)

Liaise with CDTs

Some groups think they don't need help (because they've been doing HPC for a while) in reality look at the code it has the classic problems. Users assume they have good scaling, supervisors assume grad students know what they are doing

Mark: aspire to have a driving test. (might put some people off)

Mike: had been concerned about the danger of raising awareness of possibilities that can't be met.. However this helps to measure the unsatisfied demand to make case for appropriate resourcing.

Can we use university info screens? Probably not as comms are "precious" about content.

Summary

- *Diverse ways on how we get / increase engagements*
- *Good to compare notes / approaches between sites*

Q: How do we find the users who aren't engaged with HPC?

Issues:

Academics are pressed for time

Some departments/users/groups are more accessible than others

Users not aware of potential value, code works means it's ok

Possible Solutions:

Training,

Coffee mornings,

Advertising on screens - sometimes an option,

Awareness of who's available,

Liaising with CDT

2 days of training is good, fast is good

How to engage HPC users?

Driving tests, periodic account expiry

Continued training

Symposiums (e.g. Bath)