

Press release

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PRACE Research Infrastructure inaugurated: World-class Supercomputing Service for European Science

Barcelona, 9 June 2010 – In a ceremony EC Deputy Director General Zoran Stancic and representatives of 19 nations established PRACE, the Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe. PRACE is creating a persistent pan-European High Performance Computing research infrastructure and related services. Four nations have agreed to provide 400 million Euro to implement supercomputers with a combined computing power in the multi Petaflop/s range over the next 5 years. This funding is complemented by up to 70 million Euros from the European Commission which is supporting the preparation and implementation of this infrastructure. These leadership class systems will help European scientists and engineers to remain internationally competitive.

Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes said: "I warmly welcome the launch of the PRACE supercomputer infrastructure as scientific computing is a key driver for the development of modern science and technology and for addressing the major challenges of our time like climate change, energy saving and the ageing population."

PRACE, the Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe, is a unique persistent pan-European Research Infrastructure (RI) for High Performance Computing (HPC). The partnership was established through the close collaboration of the European countries that prepared the legal, financial, and technical basis in a project funded in part by the European Commission. PRACE provides Europe with world-class systems for world-class science and strengthens Europe's scientific and industrial competitiveness.

"Science and industry needs computing power and knowledge on the highest level. The collective European effort provided by PRACE will help European researchers to reach out to unique scientific insights and innovative products", expressed Professor Achim Bachem, Chairman at the Forschungszentrum Jülich and coordinator of PRACE preparatory phase project.

PRACE will maintain a pan-European HPC service consisting of up to six top of the line leadership systems (Tier-0) well integrated into the European HPC ecosystem. Each system will provide computing power of several Petaflop/s (one quadrillion operations per second) in midterm. On the longer term (2019) Exaflop/s (one quintillion) computing power will be targeted by PRACE. Users will be supported by experts in porting, scaling, and optimizing applications to novel, highly parallel computer architectures. An in-depth training program accompanies the PRACE offering teaching scientists and students how to best exploit the unprecedented capabilities of the systems. A scientific steering committee will provide advice to PRACE and operate alongside a bespoke peer review process through which access to the Tier-0 resources will be granted based on scientific excellence.

The PRACE RI is an international non-profit association with its seat in Brussels. The association is named 'Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe AISBL' and has 19 members, representing

Austria, Bulgaria, Cryprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. A Partner from Norway will accede to PRACE by June 30. Additional European states are invited to join.

PRACE RI has already started to operate. The first production system, a one Petaflop/s IBM Blue Gene/P (Jugene) is installed at Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany, a Gauss Centre for Supercomputing member site. A call for proposals for access to resources on this first PRACE Tier-0 system was opened on May 10, 2010. Jugene is one of the most powerful computers in the world.

More information about the call is available on www.prace-project.eu/hpc-access

Several other world-class systems will follow the first production system. PRACE has to date secured 400 million Euros of national funding for Tier-0 systems for the next five years. The implementation will be funded in part through European Commission funding in the First Implementation Phase project (PRACE-1IP) starting on July 1, 2010.

More information: www.prace-project.eu, prace-coordinator@fz-juelich.de

About PRACE: The Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe (PRACE) is an international non-profit association with its seat in Brussels. The PRACE Research Infrastructure (RI) provides a persistent world-class High Performance Computing (HPC) service for scientists and researchers from academia and industry. The PRACE leadership systems form the apex of the performance pyramid and are well integrated into the European HPC ecosystem. The preparation and implementation of the PRACE RI receive EC funding under grants RI-211528 and FP7-261557.

