

**Nordic LHC Computing Grid Committee**

Date: **Thursday, November 16, 2023, 13:00 – 14:40**

Location: **NordForsk Office, Stensberggata 27, Oslo, and Zoom**

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Invitees: Håvard Helstrup, Norway (chair)  
Farid Ould-Saada (Norway)  
Tomas Lindén, Finland  
Mikael Rännar, Sweden  
Abdulrahman Azab, NeIC Executive Manager  
Mattias Wadenstein, ex-officio, NT1 Area Coordinator  
Oxana Smirnova, ex-officio, NeIC CERN Liaison (at the minutes)

Invitees on Zoom: Josva Kleist, Denmark (until 13:40)  
Gianfranco Sciacca, associated member, ATLAS

Apologies: Jørgen Beck Hansen, Denmark  
Richard Brenner, Sweden

**Item NLCG 23-25 Welcome, approval of today's agenda**

No changes to the agenda proposed.

**Decision:** Agenda is approved.

**Item NLCG 23-26 Actions follow-up****Cover Documents:**

1. Meeting Protocol 3/2023.

Status of the actions:

AP1. NORDUnet agreement is almost ready

AP2. Done

AP3. Done

AP4. Done, agreed to pledge all the existing disk to ALICE (results in over-pledged disk in 2024)

AP5. Tomas sent the document, more details in AOB

AP6. Done

**Decision:** Action point 1 is carried over

**Item NLCG 23-27 Updates from the management**

Gudmund H. updates the Committee on the NeIC future plans. Funding from NordForsk for 2024 is secured, allowing to complete the currently running projects in accordance to the existing contracts. NT1 contracts are also being extended until end-2024. The longer-term planning is still in works, the extension of the NeIC MoU by 1 year is yet to be formalized, details are expected to be clear after the December NeIC and NordForsk Board meetings. Overall, there is a commitment from NordForsk to continue coordinating Nordic Tier1 activities on a long-term, but practical implementation details are yet to be formulated in the new MoU.

Farid O.-S. points out that in order to avoid the risk of losing a coherent Tier1 as a Nordic unit, it is important to stress the added Nordic value of Tier1, including cost-efficiency with respect to operating separate national units without coordination. Abdulrahman A. confirms that a lot of attention is put into elucidating these benefits to funding agencies.

Josva K. concurs that it is important to show that efficiency of the current Tier1 is better than that of many Tier2s, and administrative coordination alone would not make them a Tier1.

Farid O.-S. proposes that national physics communities should prepare a document, re-confirming the interest from physicists to maintain a Tier1 as a unit, and not a loose set of sites. Gudmund H. agrees that it is a good idea. Abdulrahman A. also agrees that a document should exist that explains why is it important to have a Tier1, and what are the consequences of not having it. Gudmund H. also agrees that such a document should be originating from the physics communities directly, not through NeIC.

Mattias W. asks whether there are alternatives to NordForsk hosting Tier1. It is everybody's opinion that a body overseeing Tier1 should exist, one way or another, like it was originally done via NDGF. Abdulrahman A. elaborates that in addition to an operational unit, a project office is also needed, carrying out tasks currently covered by the Steering Group of NT1. Discussion continues to discuss benefits of a larger NeIC, including other communities, e.g. the Norwegian AI Cloud, or quantum computing. A wider-scoped NeIC is seen as a more attractive partner for other activities, as opposed to a narrow-focused Tier1. There is also a risk of reduced support from national funding agencies to an organization that only hosts Tier1. If support for operating Tier1 will be reduced, physics communities will have to re-allocate the necessary effort from physics research tasks, which is detrimental to science.

Farid O.-S. would like to know, what is the overall strategy of NordForsk on cross-disciplinarity of the infrastructure. Tomas L. would also like to know, what is the position of national service providers. Gudmund H. sees them as supportive, but while until now they received dedicated funding for NeIC collaboration, the future is unclear. Tomas L. further points out that AI use cases are becoming very important, and future collaborations can be built around those. Håvard H. summarises that is not strategically good to be labeled as only LHC Tier1, and other communities must be considered. Abdulrahman A. shares the proposal to the Research Council of Norway, outlining importance of cooperation with other communities, and proposing to maintain the current project structure. Committee members support the proposal to present it at the December Board meeting.

Håvard H. concludes that the preferred solution is to keep the entire NeIC as it is now, or at least keep the NT1 as is. Mattias W. confirms that working in a larger NeIC has been beneficial, giving an opportunity to reach out to other communities.

Abdulrahman A. reports that in end-November there will be a workshop at CSC on Horizon Europe funding calls, see <https://indico.neic.no/event/257/>, input is much welcomed.

**Decision:** Action point identified: Farid O.-S. with the help of NT1 SG will start a task force on writing a document on Tier1, to be signed by the Nordic national LHC community representatives. The contents may be based on the NRIC letter produced in spring. The letter may have annexes on costs and benefits, and may also use the external evaluation results.

### Item NLCG 23-28 Preview of 2025 pledges

#### Cover Documents:

1. Pledges spreadsheet.

Oxana S. shows the preview of 2025 experiment requirements (not yet endorsed by the CRSG), and tentative targets. Increase in CPU and disk capacities is expected to be easily met; increase in tape requirements is more challenging.

Farid O.-S. comments that no new funding is expected in Norway soon, but ATLAS requirements in 2025 are expected to be covered by the existing resources.

**Decision:** Note taken

### Item NLCG 23-29 NT1 Area Coordinator Report

#### Cover Documents:

1. Slides by Mattias W.

See slides, operations proceeded mostly smoothly, with no notable changes since the last report.

**Decision:** Note taken

### Item NLCG 23-30 Next NLCG Chairman

It is Sweden's turn to take over from Norway in 2024. Mikael R. reports that after discussion with Richard B. and Swedish LHCK, it was decided that Mikael will carry this duty.

**Decision:** Mikael R. is welcomed as the NLCG chairman in 2024.

**Item NLCG 23-31 Next meeting**

Tentative slot for the next meeting: February 29

**Decision:** Action point: Oxana S. checks with all the NLCG members whether February 29 is a suitable date.

**Item NLCG 23-32 A.O.B.**

Tomas L. updates on the LUMI integration work. Attempts continue towards enabling CVMFS. A similar work on the Alps system in Switzerland resulted in a technical solution that can be ported to LUMI, to be investigated further. Gianfranco S. adds that the ambition is to run all workflows, not only the traditional for HPC simulation. LUMI user support appears to assign lower priority to our requests, some pressure needs to be applied.

Mattias W. reports on exchanges with the NAIC (Norwegian AI Cloud) project, which looks for a solution to handle transfers of petabytes of datasets, currently stored at the Norwegian EduCloud, for staging them elsewhere, including LUMI. The combination of ARC CE and dCache appears to be a fitting solution.

**Decision:** Action point: Tomas L. and Abdulrahman A. follow up on LUMI integration.

**Actions**

- AP1. Mattias W. and Josva K. finalise the amended version of the NORDU net agreement and draft the next agreement.
- AP2. Farid O.-S. with the help of NT1 SG starts a task force on writing a document on Tier1, to be signed by the Nordic national LHC community representatives.
- AP3. Oxana S. checks with all the NLCG members whether February 29 is a suitable date for the next meeting.
- AP4. Tomas L. and Abdulrahman A. follow up on LUMI integration.