



Consolidation and Rethinking in 2007?

CiE The Growth of a Successful Conference Series

The CiE conference series started as a means of giving an interdisciplinary research area a more public profile, with a view to enhancing its fundability within the EU context. We have been more successful than we had expected with the former, but have faced continued frustration in our efforts to achieve EU funding.

Our first conference, CiE 2005 in Amsterdam, surprised many of us by attracting approximately 200 participants, and many of these commented on the excitement of the scientific mix, and on the feeling of a new kind of conference environment for researchers with a computability related agenda. CiE 2006 in Swansea looks set to maintain the high standards set last year, and already CiE 2007 in Siena is eagerly anticipated. The planned CiE conference series currently stands at:



- * **CiE 2005: New computational paradigms.**
Amsterdam, The Netherlands, June 8 - June 12, 2005.
- * **CiE 2006: Logical approaches to computational barriers.**
Swansea, Wales, June 30 - July 5, 2006.
- * **CiE 2007: Computation and Logic in the Real World.**
Siena, Italy. June 18-23, 2007.
- * **CiE 2008: Logic and Theory of Algorithms.**
Athens, Greece. June 2008.
- * **CiE 2009: Mathematical Theory and Computational Practice.**
Heidelberg, Germany. June 2009.
- * **CiE 2010: Programs, Proofs, Processes.**
Lisbon, Portugal. June 2010.

Springer LNCS proceedings have accompanied both CiE conferences held so far, and it is hoped to consolidate the link with Springer in 2007. There have also been a number of journal special issues, and a contract with Springer for a post-conference volume following CiE 2005, entitled *New Computational Paradigms: Changing Conceptions of What is Computable*, has been signed.

A small Conference Series Steering Committee has been formalised, in consultation with the CiE Coordinators Panel, with current membership:

- * Barry Cooper (Leeds)
- * Benedikt Löwe (Amsterdam; Chair)
- * Elvira Mayordomo Cámara (Zaragoza)
- * Dag Normann (Oslo)
- * Andrea Sorbi (Siena)
- * Peter van Emde Boas (Amsterdam)

CiE Marie Curie funding initiatives

A Marie Curie proposal to fund a four-year series of CiE conferences, starting in 2006, was submitted to the EU in May 2005, and was not funded.

We also responded to the June 17, 2005 Call for proposals for Marie Curie Research Training Networks. The proposal roughly followed Model 2 from last year's CiE discussion document, arguing for a big network retaining all CiE nodes, but distinguishing two types of nodes: training nodes and training support nodes. A novel feature of the preparation of the proposal was the enlisting of a professional proposal adviser (Martin Pickard from Grant Craft) with a good record of success in obtaining funding for clients. But the preparation of the proposal was made much more difficult by the 10 page limit on length, and once again we failed to convince the EU assessors of the strength of our case.

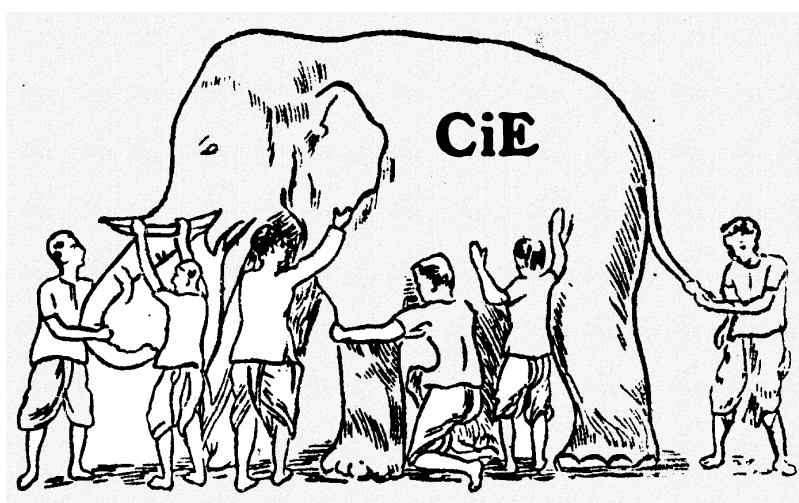
As we reported to Martin Pickard: "I wrote to the EU, and just got their evaluation (attached). I am afraid it is clear the people they used don't have the faintest what CiE is all about! This is partly our failure to explain, but the 10 page limit was particularly hard on us, given the complexity of what we were proposing." His reply illustrates the scale of the problem: "It was an extremely difficult message to get across within the remit of their strategic requirements and you're right, they didn't understand it at all, and therein lies the nub of the problem - Europe needs Educating !!"

Recently we submitted a second Marie Curie proposal to fund a four-year series of CiE conferences (including a newly added Lisbon conference), and are awaiting the outcome.

CiE Future funding strategy

It is not yet clear how the funding ground rules will change under Framework 7, but we are expecting a new call for something like the current Marie Curie Research Training Networks around December of 2006. What is clear, is that we face great difficulties getting over our vision of the importance of theoretical work in an interdisciplinary setting to EU evaluators. We need strategies for making what we propose more conventionally acceptable, and capable of being directed towards sympathetic reviewers.

In Amsterdam we already envisaged CiE becoming an umbrella for many different funding and organisational initiatives related to computability. Although the vision guiding the network as a whole is clear to most of our members, as a vehicle for attracting funding it certainly seems to suffer from the "blind men inspecting an elephant" phenomenon. For us, it is valuable to meet with people approaching deep questions of com-



putability in very different ways, and from within different disciplines. From outside, this diversity and complexity of interrelationships becomes confusing.

We propose that CiE fosters a number of different, and possibly overlapping, Marie Curie RTN-type initiatives.

There are a number of advantages to a more multi-lateral approach:

1. Better targeting of suitable evaluators. For instance, the successful MODNET model theory proposal would have been evaluated by logicians. The inter-disciplinarity was modest compared to that of CiE, but understandable within the limits of the evaluators' horizons.
2. More focused research projects, with more easily identifiable outputs.
3. Much easier to write proposals. The coordinator will be familiar with all the research he or she is describing.
4. Improved critical mass for the broad research area, as observed by the EU. Experience tells us that more proposals in a given area enhance the chances of at least one proposal being successful.
5. A breaking down of the hierarchical structure of CiE, leading to new initiatives and an invigoration of the CiE network as a whole.

There are also potential problems of lack of coordination. While CiE should encourage different initiatives, one would hope that CiE members would feel able to share information on what they are intending via the CiE Coordinators Panel. The Coordinators Panel would discuss strategy, and try to ensure an optimal pattern of proposals related to any EU call.

CiE The Future Organisational Basis of CiE

This was discussed in Amsterdam, and the feeling was that the organisation of CiE should remain flexible and fairly ad hoc, at least until problems emerged. A description of the current administration of CiE can be found at:

<http://www.maths.leeds.ac.uk/~pmt6sbc/cie.admin.html>

All aspects of CiE administration can be scrutinised and questioned via the AGM, or through being raised via a member of the Coordinators Panel.

CiE Management Group
June 2006

