

Support to Emerging NRENs

Cathrin STÖVER

*Chief International Relations and Communications Officer, GÉANT
City House, Cambridge, United Kingdom
Tel: +441223371336, Email: cathrin.stover@geant.org*

Abstract

The UbuntuNet Alliance and the AfricaConnect project have led to the creation of various NRENs in Southern and Eastern Africa. Success stories of newly created NRENs can be found, for example, in Zambia or Uganda. But there are still various countries in the region that have not yet created an NREN or an NREN-like organisation and many more where the NREN continues in an embryonic state without the necessary national or international data communications capacity to allow it to operate a production network and offer services to its member institutions. South and Eastern African NRENs are not alone in this situation. Across the world, NRENs struggle to “take the next step” and to keep developing.

Keywords

NRENs, RRENs, Value of NRENs, Funding, Support, Publications

Support Tools Available to Emerging NRENs

1. The Case for NREN Portal

A voluntary group of professionals from regional research and education networking organisations from around the globe has come together over the last year to address the need for support to developing NRENs. Through AfricaConnect co-funding they created a website "The Case for NRENs" making the case to funders and users, showcasing success stories and offering resources and tools for NRENs in development or countries wishing to start the development of an NREN. The portal can be found at www.casefornrens.org and offers a pool of resources to emerging NRENs making a pitch to their funding bodies, member institutions and partners. A benchmarking opportunity is given to emerging NRENs to compare against what is deemed a “successful” NREN, allowing for comparison and development towards long term sustainability. The portal makes further resources and tools available to support the development of an NREN organisation such as an example financial model for an NREN.

2. Research 4 Life

Research4Life is the collective name for the four programmes – HINARI, AGORA, OARE and ARDI – that provide developing countries with free or low cost access to academic and professional peer-reviewed content online.

Eligible libraries and their users benefit from:

- Online access to up to 45,000 peer-reviewed international scientific journals, books, and databases
- Full-text articles which can be downloaded for saving, printing or reading on screen

- Searching by keyword, subject, author or language
- Resources available in several languages
- Training in information literacy and promotional support

Research4Life is a public-private partnership of the WHO, FAO, UNEP, WIPO, Cornell and Yale Universities and the International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers. Working together with technology partner Microsoft, the partnership's goal is to help attain six of the UN's eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015, reducing the scientific knowledge gap between industrialized countries and the developing world.

References

www.caseformrens.org

www.research4life.org

Biography

Cathrin Stöver joined GÉANT (then known as DANTE) in October 1997 as External Relations Manager. Between 2002 and 2008 Cathrin was Project Manager of the ALICE project and under her management, ALICE led to the creation of the Latin American RedCLARA network and the CLARA organisation. In 2011, Cathrin was appointed Chief International Relations and Communications Officer and has since steered the company's international networking projects, such as also the AfricaConnect project between 2011 and 2015. Since June 2015, Cathrin project manages the AfricaConnect2 project in the West and Central African region.

Cathrin has a degree in European Business Studies and has studied and worked in Germany, France, the UK and US; she is based in Madrid, Spain.