Introduction

The GÉANT Emerging NREN Programme (ENP) is part of the GÉANT Project (GN5-1)[1] and has been taking place alongside TNC, GÉANT's flagship yearly conference, since 2018. In its consecutive editions the programme has aimed to integrate individuals from emerging NRENs from around the globe into the TNC community and create further synergies and connections at different organisational levels between European and international NRENs.

In five editions the programme has reached 67 participants from 39 different countries and territories.

This year the GÉANT Emerging NREN Programme will be held physically alongside TNC24 from Monday 10 June 2024 to Friday 15 June 2024 in Rennes, France and supported by RENATER, the French NREN.

ENP Programme 24

The ENP24 programme will consist of the activities highlighted below. Candidates are expected to participate in the full programme.

- ### TNC24 attendance

TNC is the largest Research & Education networking conference which aims to present participants with a unique overview of the latest developments in research networking, both in the technical field and in the area of application and management. Every year TNC brings together a wide cross section of specialists from a variety of roles in the areas of networking, Trust & Identity, access management and more from all NRENs, universities, research organisations and institutions, and industry.

ENP24 candidates will participate in the full TNC24 programme and registrations fees will be waived by the conference organizers.

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[1] As part of the GÉANT Framework Partnership Agreement (GN5-FPA), the GN5-1 project receives funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101100680.

- **Dedicated ENP programme coordinated with the conference's local NREN host**

ENP participants will also enjoy a tailor-made programme that includes the following dedicated sessions:

- **A dedicated day with the TNC host, RENATER**, the French NREN on Monday or/and on Friday.
  In the past sessions have included presentations of European NRENs, visits to Supercomputers, Campus network equipment, meeting with national telecommunication operators, end users, ICT centers, tech hubs, etc…

- **A GÉANT presentation,** that will introduce the GÉANT Community Programme, special groups and tasks forces.
  This session was introduced for the first time at TNC23, other participants to the conference interested in ENP joined and made the discussions and exchanges richer.

- A **meeting with the GÉANT CEO** (to be confirmed).

In addition, prior to TNC24 a series of videoconference calls will be held with the participants to help them prepare so that they get the maximum benefit out of attending TNC24.

A tentative Agenda can be found in Annex I.

- **Lightning talk submissions**

ENP participants are strongly encouraged to submit Lightning Talk proposals on a topic they would like to share with the TNC24 audience.
Further details can be found at: https://tnc24.geant.org/submit/

The submissions will be closed on 11 March 2024 and the selection will be based on a competitive process.

In the past five TNC conferences, **14 ENP** participants were selected in this very competitive process and delivered very interesting, rich and diverse presentations with titles such as:
- "The Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) in the Ethiopian Education and Research Network".
- "Log Management and visualisation of AMRES statistics using Open-Source Tools".
- "Move our Content to IPv6, please!"

For selected candidates, GÉANT will look at organizing support for the Lightning Talk presentation.

- **Integration with the International NREN community**

In order to make the ENP more valuable, all participants will be paired with GÉANT community members based on common professional backgrounds, in order to facilitate informal dialogue between individuals sharing the same interests.

The objective of this pairing experience is to make TNC participation more relevant and impactful for the ENP candidates by providing the opportunity to strengthen and enrich the NREN community and build new relationships. Participants from the GÉANT community also greatly benefit from the exchange as it enhances their understanding of NRENs around the world by listening to different perspectives on needs and challenges.

- **New! Network Engineer Track**

In addition to the standard ENP Track, GÉANT will also open 2 slots for a dedicated Network Engineer track. Participants will have the opportunity to join in full the standard ENP track, in addition to the planning and building of the conference network with the GÉANT Community engineers (NORDUnet and Rennes University colleagues).

Selected participants will be expected to be available virtually for preparation meetings prior to TNC24 and be in Rennes Saturday and Sunday prior to the conference to set up the conference network.

This hands-on experience will be beneficial for medior to senior network engineers, to improve skills on planning and implementing an NREN network and increase skills in eduroam and radio server set-up.

Participants will need to justify their interest in the ENP application form, and an ENP selection committee composed of the ENP coordinator and TNC organizer will select 2 individuals by mid-March.

Candidate Profile

The ENP team invites Regional and National R&E Networks to nominate representatives to take part in the programme. We encourage the participation of NREN staff members who are part of the community but are not usually able to attend conferences and would benefit from the knowledge exchange. We also strongly promote diversity among participants, for instance by encouraging applications from women wherever possible.

The ENP24 welcomes up to three candidates for each of the following regions:
- North Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean & Western Asia
- West and Central Africa
- East and Southern Africa
- Latin American and the Caribbean
- Asia-Pacific
- Central Asia
- Non-EU members from Eastern Partnership Countries
- The Western Balkans

Candidates' Application Requirements

Applicants must be an NREN employee or NREN affiliated and must submit their application by providing their CV in English and complete an application form that includes the following elements:

- Organisation, current role and a description of the candidate's responsibilities,
- Topics/issues of interest in the candidate's work,
- Languages spoken and level,
- Reason for applying for the Emerging NREN Programme,
- Participants are also highly encouraged to submit Lightning Talk proposals. This requirement is mandatory for the GÉANT WOMEN in STEM sponsorship.

In addition to the pre-requisites, the following criteria will be taken into consideration for the final selection:

- Quality of the overall application
- Diversity and gender: The Emerging NREN Programme strongly encourages applications from women wherever possible.

Participant Selection and Sponsorship

This year two selection tracks will be made available to participants. One via their Regional Research Education Network in addition to a GÉANT women in STEM selection.

Regional REN Selection

Up to three candidates will be proposed by their Regional Research and Education Network in collaboration with the local NREN.

The RREN selection team will expect the following pre-requisites from applicants:

- CV in English,
- Complete ENP24 application form,
- In addition, some regions might define other criteria for selection. (e.g. mandatory lightning talk application or targeting the most emerging NRENs from their community).

Regional Networks will gather candidate information and send it to leila.dekkar@geant.org by 28th February 2024.

Regional REN Sponsorship

- All costs associated with travelling, accommodation and sundry expenses will be covered by EU-funded projects, the regional REN, or some other arrangement agreed locally, as appropriate. GÉANT will not provide any financial support for such costs.
- The TNC24 registration fee will be waived for all participants by GÉANT.

GÉANT Selection – Women in STEM

In addition to the Regional REN selection, GÉANT will directly sponsor two to three female participants from countries and territories listed by the OECD DAC[2] as official development assistance recipients.

The GÉANT selection team will expect the following pre-requisites from applicants:

- CV in English,
- Complete ENP24 application form,
- Lightning talk submission.

GÉANT direct candidates must submit their application form and CV to leila.dekkar@geant.org by 28th February 2024, clearly indicating *"Emerging NREN Programme 2024"* in the subject of their email.

A committee composed of 3 GÉANT International and Partner Relations Managers will meet in March to finalise the list of participants.

Candidates may apply to both the regional REN and the GÉANT sponsorship as the two selection process will take place in parallel.

GÉANT Sponsorship

- All costs associated with travelling and accommodation will be covered by the GN5-1 project, as appropriate. If outside of the GÉANT Membership, sponsored participants will sign a volunteer agreement with GÉANT to expense claim: air travel, public transport, visa application costs, hotel costs, meals and travel insurance.

- The TNC24 registration fee will be waived for all participants by GÉANT.

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[2] https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm

Annex I Tentative Agenda for ENP24

Prior to TNC

Time	Activity
8 May 24 14:00 – 15:30 CET	**Welcome to ENP session** (Virtual)
Online	**Meet and greet with your pair**

TNC23 Week
Tuesday 11 June 24

Time	Activity
09:30 -10:00	**TNC registration**
10:00 -10:30	**TNC101 getting the most out of your 1st TNC** Room: tbd
11:00 – 12:30	**Opening Plenary** Room: Concert Hall PoC
12:30 – 13:00	**TNC Lunch**
13:00 – 14:00	**CEO – Emerging NREN meeting** Room: tbd
14:00 – 15:30	**TNC Sessions and Demonstrations** https://tnc23.geant.org/programme/ (last year example)
16:00 – 17:30	**Lightning Talks: First Strike** Room: tbd
17:30 – 19:00	**Opening Reception** Location: TNC24 Venue
18:45 – 21:00	**ENP Pair Dinner** *Meeting point 18:30 – TNC23 Conference venue Entrance*
20:30 – 23:45	**Kick-off party** Location: tbd

Wednesday 12 June 24

Time	Activity
09:00 – 10:30	**Wednesday Plenary** Room: tbd
11:00 – 12:30	**Lightning Talk Plenaries - Part 2** Room: tbd
12:30 – 14:00	**TNC Lunch**
14:00 – 15:30	**Emerging NREN Programme** **GÉANT presentation** Room: tbd
19:00 – 23:00	**Conference Dinner** Location: tbd

Thursday 13 June 24

Time	Activity
09:00 -15:30	**TNC Sessions and Demonstrations** https://tnc23.geant.org/programme/ (example of last year)
12:30 – 14:00	**TNC Lunch**
16:00 – 17:30	**Closing plenary** Room: tbd

Friday 14 June 24

Time	Day RENATER programme and meeting with French ICT Institutions
09:00 – 17:30	Meeting point – TNC24 Conference venue Entrance

Annex II: Lightning Talks at TNC23

Lightning Talks were given at TNC23 by 3 Emerging NREN Programme participants. The Lightning Talks can be viewed via the links in the table below:

Name	Institution	Talk Title	Video Link	Time on Video
Lensa Abera	Ethiopian Education and Research Network Malawi	"the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) in the Ethiopian Education and Research Network".	https://tnc23.geant.org/recordings/?session=s274	58.00
Katarina Simonović	AMRES, Serbia	"Log Management And Visualization Of Amres Statistics Using Open-Source Tools".	https://tnc23.geant.org/recordings/?session=s276	13.20
Alexius Chipalamwazani	Malawi Research and Education Network	"Move our Content to IPv6, please!	https://tnc23.geant.org/recordings/?session=s276	25.00

Annex III Participants Quotes:

"ENP23 allowed me to attend TNC23. Now, I am considering ways of participating in TNC in the future. As an NREN leader here in Sri Lanka interested in coordinating and developing other regional NRENs, TNC engagement is an invaluable experience for me. We have a long way to go. Therefore, keeping in touch and working together is the way forward. Therefore, almost everything that happened via ENP23 and beyond at TNC23 was a great experience and highlight for me."

"My favourite moment was delivering the Lightning talk, while my favourite sessions was topics regarding Trust and Identity."

"The lightning talks were my favourite. Straight to the point and full of value. Also the networking opportunities were fantastic, very good line up of exhibitors and demonstrations."

"The TNC23 and ENP organization have been fantastic. I have found got a lot of ideas and several models that I would adapt to the Peruvian NREN. In addition, several collaboration opportunities have been opened during the interactions with other NREN leaders and also with the regional network in Latin America – RedCLARA."

"I knew Ivana before ENP Program, we are working together in the perfSONAR team, but it was very nice meeting her in person and outside of our perfSONAR work. She introduced me to the work of GÉANT and some specific services that I could work on, and also could be implemented by my NREN."

"The pairings create an opportunity for meaningful discussions, knowledge exchange, and guidance tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the emerging NRENs"
"Both the meeting with the GEANT CEO and also the presentations by DFN and GEANT CITO. The insights and presentations shared were invaluable."

"It was a wonderful opportunity for emerging NRENs to get the exposure to learn from the best experiences in the education and research community. I am grateful to be part of the ENP and met other emerging NREN participants and the whole community. The CEO meeting we had with Erik, the directions he gave us, and the desire he has to see the emerging NRENs grow up are very encouraging. Wednesday's program which was the GÉANT presentation and discussion was very helpful and informative to work on the services GÉANT provides and how to bring them to our community. We also had the best times at all the social events."

"Networking Opportunities: "Meeting and connecting with professionals, researchers, and peers from different NRENs and providers, allowing for valuable discussions, knowledge exchange, and potential collaborations."