Reviewing Brazilian International Collaboration Programs on IT: Challenges and Lessons Learned

Lisandro Zambenedetti Granville

Outline

- **Reviewing project calls and topics**
- **Selection and assisting project execution**
- **Lessons learned**
- **Opportunities**

Reviewing project calls and topics

- **1st cycle**
    - Jul. 2008: invitation letters have been sent to 32 research groups
        - MCTI defined the topic (Digital TV) and who would be invited
        - 35 projects submitted
    - Oct. 2008: 1st round notifications
        - Reviewers defined by MCTI too
        - Outcome: 21 selected projects should be merged into 8 networks
    - 30-31 Oct. 2008: workshop with network leaders
    - 20 Nov. 2008: 2nd round and final results
        - 6 networks selected
        - Around R$ 12 millions
    - Jan 2009 to Dec 2011 – Networks and their projects

Revieweing project calls and topics

- **2nd cycle**
  - Dec. 2009: Open call is distributed
    - Topic: contents for digital TV
  - Feb. 2010: submission deadline
    - 29 projects submitted
  - Mar. 2010: 1st round results
    - 16 project should be merged into 4 networks
  - Mar. 2010: workshop with network leaders
  - Apr. 2010: 2nd round final results
    - 6 networks selected
    - Around R$1,3 millions
  - Jul. 2010 to Jun. 2011 – Networks and their projects

Revieweing project calls and topics

- **3rd Cycle**
  - Cycle composed of three open class:
  1. Network and service virtualization, including security and management
  2. Cloud computing, including big data and global access
  3. Smart cities, including e-government and metropolitan wireless networks

Revieweing project calls and topics

- Oct. 2010 – Open calls are distributed
- Nov. 2010 – Submission deadline
  - 106 project submitted
    - 29 in cloud computing
    - 16 in network and service virtualization
    - 61 in smart cities
- Nov. 2010 – 1st round results
  - 22 reviewers
  - 11 projects in cloud computing
  - 7 projects in network and service virtualization
  - 24 projects in smart cities
  - 42 projects should be merged into 8 networks

Revieweing project calls and topics

- Dec. 2010 – Workshop with network leaders
- Dec. 2010 – 2nd round results
  - 7 networks accepted
  - 1 in network and service virtualization
  - 2 in cloud computing
  - 4 in smart cities
  - Around R$ 9 millions
- Jan. 2011 to Dec. 2013 – Networks and their projects

- **4th cycle**
  - 1st cycle together with EU
  - Composed of 3 calls:
    - High Performance Computing
    - Cloud Computing
    - Experimental Testbeds
  - 2 types of projects:
    - Regular research projects
    - Coordinated and Support Actions (CSA)

Revieweing project calls and topics

- Mar. 2015 – Open calls advertised in Brazil
- Apr. 2015 – Submission deadline
  - 25 projects in cloud computing
    - 24 research projects
    - 1 CSA
  - 7 projects in HPC
  - 6 projects in testbeds
  - Projects were not merged, because they were submitted as networks since the beginning
- Jun. 2015 – Selecting in Brussels with 28 reviewers
  - 3 projects in cloud computing
    - 2 research projects
    - 1 CSA
  - 1 project in HPC
  - 1 project in testbeds
  - Around EU$ 10 millions
- Jan 2016 – Projects will start

- **Selection**
  1. Open calls are agreed and distributed
  2. Projects are submitted through JEMS
  3. Reviewers are selected excluding authors of submitted projects
  4. Project proposals are distributed to reviewers in JEMS
  5. Reviews are received
  6. CTIC pre-select projects and indicate how networks should be formed
  7. Network proposals are written by project authors
  8. Each network submits a new, single proposal
  9. A subset of original reviewers is defined
  10. Workshop with questions & answers
  11. Final decision

Selection and assisting project execution

- **Assisting (managing?)**

  1. Network leaders indicate how money will be distributed along the network

  2. Schedule for deliverables every 3 months

  3. Schedule for receiving money every 3 months

  4. Network starts in the beginning of month 1

  5. At the end of month 3, promised deliverables are sent

  6. Money is sent to the network if promised deliverables are accepted. If not, no partner receives anything

Lessons learned

- **From the selection process**
  - Networks formed by researchers themselves tend to exclude younger or less known researchers → less chances for new researchers
  - Networks that are enforced causes tension between competing researchers → but the risk of being not selected solves the problem

- **From assisting the development of projects**
  - Operating as a network is still a challenge for the Brazilian community, but the situation is improving
  - Partners are forced to work together otherwise they may not receive money in the next round, which hurts their teams
  - Still, lazy partners may exist and remain undetected because the network works on their behalf

Lessons learned

- **In terms of topics:**
  - Cloud computing is still strong
  - Networking topics are less frequent than expected, although the Brazilian networking industry seems to be larger (and certainly older) than cloud's

- **In terms of support:**
  - MCTI has been the traditional sponsor
  - MiniCom, however, should be a target too
  - Few hopes wrt CGI.br at the moment

Opportunities

- **FAPESP/MCTI/MC call**
  - Deadline in Nov. 2015 – Too broad topics, from a networking perspective
  - International collaboration is mentioned, but it is neither required nor emphasized

- **MCTI, USA, UnB, SBC, and CTIC/RNP are organizing a workshop on cybersecurity, Nov. 2015 in Brasília**

- **MCTI and EC plans to have another joint call on Cloud Computing and Internet of Thing to be issue in 2016 (selection on 2017, start in 2018)**

Conclusion

- **There are interesting models to run international collaboration, specially considering large networks of researchers**

- **Constant assessment of projects lead to better results (obvious), but also to longer relationships between researchers**

- **New opportunities (topics) should be listed by the research community, but without proper political support it does not translate into concrete calls**

- **Models are not a problem, topics are**

Reviewing Brazilian International Collaboration Programs on IT: Challenges and Lessons Learned

Lisandro Zambenedetti Granville