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**EIFFEL**

**Evolved Internet Future for European Leadership**

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**Description of EIFFEL Office Tools and Support Activities**

*Abstract:*

This document describes the tools used by the EIFFEL office both in support of the project itself, as well as the EIFFEL Think Tank. We also discuss some of the related support activities initiated by the project to support the operation of the Think Tank.

**Keywords** – EIFFEL Think Tank, Tools, Support Activities

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PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

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## Contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	4
2	TOOLS FOR THE EIFFEL PROJECT .....	5
3	TOOLS FOR THE EIFFEL THINK TANK .....	7
4	ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING THE THINK TANK.....	8
5	CONCLUSIONS .....	9

## 1 Introduction

In this document we describe the tools used by the EIFFEL Office in its daily operations, as well as the different tools and support systems that have been set up for the EIFFEL Support Action (SA) as a whole, as well as the tools supporting the operation of the EIFFEL Think Tank (TT). We also discuss some of the supporting actions initiated by the EIFFEL SA to assist the TT in its various operations, including gathering of background information as well as support for future publication activities. The present document has been finalized after the first TT meeting as it was imperative to test some of the tools for organization of the first full meeting and to get also feedback from TT participants on the appropriate tools.

The remainder of this document is organised as follows. In Chapter 2, the tools used to facilitate the operation of the EIFFEL Support Action itself are described. In Chapter 3, we focus on the tools operated by the EIFFEL SA in support of the EIFFEL TT. In Chapter 4, additional support activities pursued by the project are discussed. Finally, the document is concluded with a summary and discussion in Chapter 5.

## 2 Tools for the EIFFEL project

The main partner for providing technical support and facilities for tools is Eurescom. This choice is a natural one due to their substantial expertise in these matters, and also improves coordination by focussing support requirements towards a single partner. The specific choices for tools were made by the project as a whole, based on a careful consideration and review of the various requirements and functionalities provided by the available technical solutions.

### Web Hosting and Content Management System (CMS)

The project maintains a Web presence at the site <http://www.fp7-eiffel.eu/>, providing information about the operation of the EIFFEL Support Action as well as schedule of the foreseen TT meetings. The project also maintains the site <http://www.future-internet.eu/> focussed on the activities surrounding the Future Internet Assembly the project was in part initiating. The EuresTools CMS forms the technical foundation of the website and provides a Web front-end which is technically based on the Open Source software Typo3. This includes a user-friendly CMS and secure and flexible account and login administration. Typo3 is a Web-based CMS, which allows users with an account to create Web content via a text-based interface through a Web browser without any HTML editing involved. The CMS offers undo and transaction rollback capability and other advanced features.

### Project Wiki

EuresTools Wiki is a Web-based groupware tool based on MediaWiki, the Open Source wiki software package which was originally developed to serve the needs of Wikipedia, a free wiki-based encyclopaedia. MediaWiki is one of the most popular general wiki solutions providing a rich core feature set and a mechanism to attach extensions to provide additional functionality. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for collaborative authoring, which is precisely the main application for the use of wiki in the project. At present authoring of deliverables, CfPs for the TT meetings, tasks related to the project management etc. are all handled through the wiki of the project.

### Mail List server

The project utilizes also a mailing list for communication between core partners, and a number of *ad hoc* mailing lists for specific organizational activities such as for receiving registrations to TT meetings. The mailing list server software used, EuresTools Mail List, includes a customised e-mail list server with Web front-end management. Features include virus-scan, anti-spam filters, an e-mail archive, and an easy-to-use Web interface for list owners. Through the Web interface, individual mailing lists can be flexibly defined and maintained according to the demands of the project.

### Audio Conferencing

The project also utilizes audio conferences between physical meetings for decision making and collaborative working. The platform used for audio conferences, namely Eurescom Audio Conferencing is an essential communication service for the project. It has proven its efficiency in several earlier projects and was thus a clear choice for the EIFFEL SA as well. The service is fully automated and available 24/7. This means, audio conferences can be flexibly set up on short notice. Each audio conference has a permanent phone number and a permanent dial-in ID. The audio conferences can be scheduled via a Web-based front-end, specifically implemented for the project.

This front-end helps the coordinator and the work package leaders to plan audio conferences and keep track of conference dates and participants.

### 3 Tools for the EIFFEL Think Tank

Like in the case of project tools, also for the TT support tools responsibilities for deployment and support for the infrastructure are focussed on Eurescom. The need for open tool support regarding the TT is more crucial since the “tool is also a message” and can either enhance or hinder open communications between partners. After careful deliberation and discussions Wiki was considered as the best general tool for different collaboration activities pursued by the TT. Additionally, more traditional tools such as mailing lists and document management systems have been set up.

#### Think Tank Wiki

A separate wiki was started and is made available to the TT. It has also been used **during** the first TT meeting by the break out sessions to prepare and present the draft statements to the plenary and serve as repository of the TT proceedings. It was planned also as a way to bridge the time between TT meetings and to be the tool for preparation of TT meetings by the TT community. It is being used in this way for the second TT meeting with preparatory position statements and supporting material being deposited there by members and invitees.

The TT wiki has a more fine-grained access control enabled than the project wiki, enabling amongst other functionalities separation between open and password-protected areas for content. By default all TT members are given user accounts and access to the wiki, including the rights to add and edit content in the common working areas. Several TT members emphasized the need to keep draft forms of discussions confidential and to keep the identities of individual draft contributors non-disclosed for privacy reasons.

#### Mailing Lists

Separate mailing lists have been set up for the TT using the same server infrastructure as described for the project mailing lists in the previous chapter. At present the mailing lists are organized into general lists as well as lists for the internal communications for the different areas of investigations as described earlier in the Deliverable D1.1. Due to similar privacy concerns as discussed above, full email lists and addresses are not made publicly available.

#### Document management system

The project has also selected and set up an instance of the BSCW document management system to enable collaborative drafting of documents beyond the possibilities offered by the TT wiki. The BSCW server enables simple storage and access to documents through a comfortable Web-based interface, and also supports advanced functionality such as locking of documents, refined version control etc.

The current “approved” file format for documents is Microsoft Word, but later when more technical documents are produced also LaTeX might be used. All the final documents are made available also as PDF files.

## 4 Activities supporting the Think Tank

Below we describe currently initiated support activities assisting the TT in its work.

### **Bibliography and database on related initiatives**

It was decided at the Aachen project meeting to start and potentially later make available to the TT community, and eventually to the community at large, a bibliography of the main articles on the Future Internet and related technologies, visions/proposals, and efforts. This task has been started on the internal project wiki and the bibliography will be enriched and maintained. Categorization has also been attempted. In addition to literature review activities, the project will also map the project and standardization organization landscapes and include these findings to the bibliography database. The purpose of this support activity is to offer such an information service to the TT members, assisting everyone involved in obtaining a wider view of the numerous initiatives active in the Future Internet space globally.

### **Publishing**

The key outcomes of the TT are expected to be documents such as research manifestos, review articles, position papers etc. The caretakers and selected additional project resources will assist the TT in the production of such documents and publications through both technological and editorial contributions. The tools described in the previous sections are in place to facilitate gathering of content and collaborative authoring, a process in which the caretakers will participate as needed. Once the TT agrees that a drafted text represents common view and is ready for publication in a selected forum, the caretakers will again be ready to assist in the process by carrying out the finalization of the draft in the appropriate format and by being in touch with the corresponding publishing contacts.

It was also discussed between the caretakers and the participants to the first TT meeting a larger undertaking of publishing a high-quality edited book on the key issues and research challenges towards a research strategy on the Internet of the future. The idea was felt to be a good one. The TT will have a second more operational discussion on this in the second meeting. The coordinator has contacted two commercial publishers (Wiley and Academic Press) to check interest on such a book, and also two national science academies to check for their interest to provide publishing support. If the book project is initiated, the existing tools including the BSCW and the wiki will be used to organize the collaborative work around the book.

### **Travel support**

For assisting the participants in the various travel arrangements related to the first TT meeting the project also organized a limited secretarial help-desk travel support made available through email and telephone line. Advice was given on the eligible use of possible travel grants, support on booking hotel rooms, ground travel arrangements etc. For some of the long distance travelers, especially with tight schedules, the help desk was able to pre-book ground transportation with economical pricing helping to bring down the overall costs for participants and the project. Full advice and support service to fill in the various travel reimbursement forms required by the arranging organizations was also arranged, so as to ensure that those followed the specific travel rules, and assisting in checking the conformance of forms and bills against the local and EC imposed regulations.

## 5 Conclusions

In this document we described the different tools used by the project and the Think Tank (TT) in its daily operations, as managed by the EIFFEL Office and in particular EIFFEL partner Eurescom. The primary purpose of the selected tools is to assist in collaboration and communication in the project and, more crucially, within the TT and its different subgroups. We also discussed some of the initiated support activities towards the TT. It should be noted that neither the tool collection nor the current support activities are final in the sense that new technologies and activities can be initiated as seen necessary in the project and TT operations. These potential new developments will be documented in the later deliverables of the project, and the experiences obtained in using the tool collection will also be documented in future documents.