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Special:

Supercomputing at Work

The Fuschl Conversations – A Central Activity of Systems Sciences

by Gerhard Chroust

Once every two years the little village of Fuschl am See, near Salzburg, becomes a centre of the Systems Sciences. During the first full week after Easter in every even year the International Federation for Systems Research (IFSR) invites some 25 to 30 scientists from all over the world to discuss systemic issues and problems in the form of a so-called conversation.

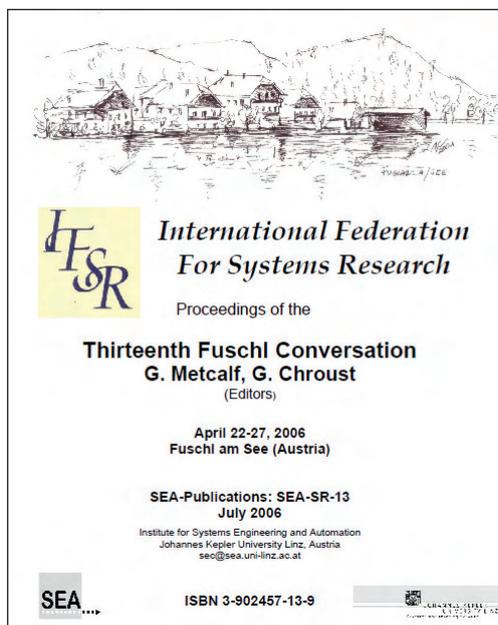
Conversations originated as an alternative to traditional conferences, from the insight that most of the benefit for participants resulted from the discussions and conversations with one another rather than from the formal content or presentations. The initial format for the Fuschl Conversations was built around Social Systems Design, as espoused by Bela H. Banathy. He defined a conversation as:

- a collectively guided disciplined inquiry
- an exploration of issues of social/societal significance
- engaged by scholarly practitioners in self-organized teams
- who selects a theme for their conversation
- which is initiated in the course of a preparation phase that leads to an intensive face-to-face learning phase.

In the Fuschl Conversation by tradition four to five teams with five to seven participants each discuss different, but related topics. The teams share their findings and participants 'visit' other teams.

The 2008 Fuschl Conversation from 29 March to 3 April had 23 participants from eleven countries world-wide. The topics (and thus the teams) were:

- basic concepts of systems sciences



Proceedings of the 2006 Conversations.

Previous proceedings are available at <http://www.ifsr.org/>.

- the trajectory of systems research and practice
- disseminating, accessing and communicating systems knowledge
- quality and excellence in systems research.

Besides the purely scientific endeavour Fuschl also proves to be a deeply human experience freely discussing topics, opinions etc; as one participant said: "When you leave Fuschl, you are a different person."

Initial results of Fuschl will be documented on IFSR's Web site in August 2008. In November 2008 the proceedings will be available in hard-copy form and also on IFSR's Web site. Proceedings of previous Conversations (see Figure 1) can also be found there.

Links:

IFSR: <http://www.ifsr.org>

Fuschl Conversations: <http://ifsr.ocg.at/world/node/45>

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Call for Participation

EACP'08 - International Colloquium "Environnements d'apprentissage pour les communautés de pratique"

Université Aboubekr Belkaid, Tlemcen, Algeria,
18-20 November 2008

The PALETTE project (Pedagogically sustained Adaptive Learning Through the exploitation of Tacit and Explicit knowledge) will organize an international seminar that aims to improve individual and collective learning of communities of practice. Topics include:

- Collaborative Learning items
- methods, tools, evaluation
- creation, usage and sharing of multimedia information
- services, e-services and Web-services, Web 2.0
- development of novel user interfaces
- ontologies.

The seminar language will be French, however, presentations in English are also accepted. The call for papers and posters session will open on 8 September 2008.

The PALETTE project is funded by the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme and managed by ERCIM.

More information:

<http://palette.ercim.org>