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The Sci-GaIA project: final results, lessons learnt and opportunities for the African Communities of Practice

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Sci-GaIA (www.sci-gaia.eu) is an EU funded project that ran from May 2015 to April 2017. Initially set out to create sustainable training to support scientific endeavour through Science Gateways and e-Infrastructures in Africa. To better motivate and to establish a clearer route to impact, the project shifted focus to embrace Open Science to better open up scientific achievements in Africa across the world. Overall, the Sci-GaIA project has made thousands of people made aware of Science Gateways, e-Infrastructures and Open Science and has created a sustainable ecosystem of Open Science compliant, Open Innovation capable and Open Education based collaboration across Africa. It has also addressed a number of UN Sustainable Development Goals effectively addressed: (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (13) Climate Action and (17) Partnerships for the Goals. Overall the project has made effective impacts on African health and public health and, consequently, on the quality and duration of life.

The major results of the project were:

- The creation of the Open Science Platform, a DevOps-compliant public research e-Infrastructure (both Grid and Cloud based) for projects and applications, and supporting training and educational materials.
- The creation of e-Research Hackfests that uses effective challenge-driven education to train, innovate and create new services, applications and developers.
- The creation of 35 Champions who have supported 24 Communities of Practice, created 7 new Science Gateways, multiple new services and 5 new Open Data Repositories.
- A thriving developer community that interacts through the African e-Infrastructures Discussion Forum, a web forum where people (users, stakeholders, decision makers) can freely discuss e-Infrastructure and Open Science related topics.
- A catalogue of services for different types of “customers” that includes 19 new federated services and 30 new applications.
- A survey analysing trends in Science Gateway and e-Infrastructure development in Africa.
- An approach to ensuring interoperability and interoperation between African, EU and global e-Infrastructures of our Open Science Platform via an e-Infrastructure Sentinel.
- The successful creation of 100 dissemination and communication media, publications, many different Sci-GaIA events and the exciting Sci-GaIA Festival of Open Science that combined a Champions conference (the User Forum Conference) and a Final Project day that celebrated the project’s achievements.

In this contribution we plan to present Sci-GaIA results, share the lessons learnt and discuss the opportunities for the African Communities of Practice to leverage and exploit project results.

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