Panel Description

Global software engineering is of growing importance due to reasons of skills, load balancing, response time, local presence and efficiency. However, many GSE projects have run into roadblocks with severe performance impacts. Working in a global context obviously has advantages but also drawbacks. While the positive side accounts for time-zone effectiveness or reduced cost in various countries, we should not close our eyes in front of the severe disadvantages. In fact the business case is surely not a simple trade-off of different cost of engineering in different regions. Working in a globally distributed project means overheads for planning and managing people. It means language and cultural barriers. It creates jealousy between the more expensive engineers being afraid of losing their jobs, while forced to train their much cheaper counterparts.

The challenges in GSE can be summarized as follows [1,2]:

- Lack of strategy and shared values in parent organization resulting in insufficient collaboration, unclear work split and ownership.
- Insufficient communication due to distance, time zones and cultural barriers.
- Dispersed work organization with a lack of understanding and support of the global nature of the GSE project and work product, several fragmented sites with overhead management and separated and dysfunctional processes, tools and teams.
- Inadequate global management resulting in micromanaged tasks or lack of visibility.
- Isolated learning and knowledge management.
- Insufficient agility compared to co-located teams.
- Inadequate supplier and contract management.
- Unknown legal environment.
- High employee turnover rate.

This panel brings together practitioners and researchers from several continents to review roadblocks to successful GSE and how they can be removed. The panelists will propose from their experiences and research how to build upon known enablers and success factors and how to effectively cope with roadblocks and risks. The panel will propose as much as possible ready-to-use advice in order to reduce impacts of the common roadblocks and thus make GSE further grow successfully.

Literature


Panelists

Christof Ebert (Panel lead), Alcatel, France, christofebert@ieee.org.
Jorge Audy, PUCRS, Brazil.
S M Balasubramaniam, Wipro, India.
Augusto Gadelha Vieira, Secretary general of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Brazil.
Michael Heiss, Siemens, Austria.
Wolfgang Strigel, QA-Labs, Canada.