

## **GÉANT and The Commons Conservancy foundation pilot the transition of eduMEET web-conferencing platform to community-financed open-source**

*GÉANT and The Commons Conservancy have joined forces to pilot the open-source, web-based videoconferencing (VC) solution, eduMEET. This software enables institutions to build a low-cost, easy to use VC platform for one-to-one or multiple-user conferences. A cost-effective, more secure alternative to commercial solutions, eduMEET is easy to run without the need to install any additional clients or plugins.*

Amsterdam, Netherlands 28 April 2023 – One of the primary objectives of the GÉANT GN5-1 project's above-the-net (network) efforts is to establish a legal-administrative framework and software governance to support community financing for the spinoff of the eduMEET platform proof of concept. Within the scope of this objective, a product ownership and stakeholder community is planned, as well as the product management and support for continued eduMEET open-source software development. This transition of the existing eduMEET service is the first step in this new direction.

eduMEET (<https://edumeet.org>) provides an easy to use, secure, affordable web conferencing platform for the international research, education, and arts community, and is a viable, reliable alternative to commercial solutions. eduMEET was developed as part of the EU-funded GÉANT project for NRENs and schools, colleges, and universities wishing to create their own on-premises VC infrastructure and services. As open-source software, eduMEET is accessible by developers and integrators who wish to extend its capabilities or incorporate it within other more complex and integrated solutions.

eduMEET is the first GÉANT service offering that will pilot a transition of project-based, internally developed software to “standalone”, open-source software external to the project environment. The transition process will focus on developing the tool’s business model alongside the ongoing development and maintenance of the software product and service. This first pilot spinoff is designed to be agile, resulting in an independent and community-supported open-source project. Lessons learned have also been documented along the way.

A collaboration with not-for-profit infrastructure The Commons Conservancy foundation (<https://commonsconservancy.org/>) was initiated to achieve these ambitious goals. The Foundation’s recommendations were followed closely throughout all phases of preparing for the transition to the open-source pilot. In particular, the public statute for the eduMEET programme was prepared to facilitate an open, transparent, and efficient governance process throughout future developments of the technology and auxiliary materials developed within the eduMEET user and development community. The selection for the governance board is currently underway, and invitations to potential board members from different environments (research, education, and the arts) will be extended in the near term.

In terms of the naming convention, because the “edu” prefix is clearly associated with educational solutions, alternative names and branding solutions are currently under consideration in order to widen the usability of the service.

This transition to open-source can potentially be replicated with other GÉANT-developed software to extend their use to new communities of users. This follows the successful transition of FileSender

(<https://filesender.org>), a well-known R&E community open-source software for simple and secure transfer of large files.

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About GÉANT

GÉANT (<https://geant.org/>) is the collaboration of European National Research and Education Networks (NRENs). Together we deliver an information ecosystem of infrastructure and services to advance research, education, and innovation on a global scale. The GÉANT project combines a high-bandwidth, high-capacity network with a growing range of services. These allow researchers to collaborate, working together wherever they are located. Together with European NRENs, GÉANT connects 50 million users in over 10,000 institutions.

About The Commons Conservancy

The Commons Conservancy(<https://commonsconservancy.org/>) is a foundation established under the law of The Netherlands in 2016. It has an unusual legal infrastructure, which it governs through an intricate system of regulations. By law, the entire system is bootstrapped through its statutes, which are standard legal boilerplate for an organisation of its type (however, with noted exceptions). The Commons Conservancy offers a lightweight and flexible governance infrastructure. The simple solution that allows many projects to not waste time and start discovering what is out there in the world for them to achieve. Virtual not-for-profit organisation is being established to run the Programme, an infrastructure for decision making, and to receive tax-friendly donations.



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