

EARN EXECUTIVE

EARN France proposal to host the EARN office

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The referenced paper proposes to combine the EARN-OSI operations centre which is being built in Amsterdam with Digital help, and the EARN office located at EHEI, University Paris V, and to locate this new EARN centre in Amsterdam.

The rationale for proposing this is the following:

1. Unique operations and management centre
2. Space availability
3. Central location
4. Dutch PTT very active
5. Low cost of telecommunications
6. DEC computer.

In my view, this proposal has 2 drawbacks which are crippling:

- This centre is not an academic centre. In fact, the proposed space is located in an industrial building.
- EARN is just getting rid of its "IBM network" image, and is now perceived as a truly independent academic network. If all central EARN activities are moved to a "DEC space", EARN will soon be

perceived
as a "DEC network".

EARN France proposes to host the EARN office in Paris, either at its current location or in another university. In any case, this proposal includes:

- 200 square meters at no cost in a University involved in Computer Sciences, and connected to EARN. This will be provided at no cost to EARN.
- One DEC computer.
We have DEC France commitment to install such a computer.
- One IBM Computer.
We have IBM France commitment to install such a computer.
- One full time person paid by EARN France.
- The possibility to have one or several thesis students working on EARN technical projects.

If we now compare the advantages/drawbacks of both proposals, we have the following:

1. Either one combined office in Amsterdam or an OSI development centre in Amsterdam and the EARN office in Paris.

We don't see a major advantage or drawback for either solutions: the centralised solution might optimise some of the costs, but EARN being a decentralised network, a decentralised management seems more logical. In addition, the choice of Amsterdam is very good for OSI activities as EARN-Netherlands (Kees Neggers) is very active on OSI, but is quite questionable for the EARN office as Kees, being Director of SURFnet, seems to have no interest in EARN

activities not
related to OSI.

2. Space availability. Both proposals are equivalent.
3. Central location. Paris is more central than Amsterdam.
4. Dutch PTT very active. This is also true for the French PTT, as they are now friendly to EARN: the next EARN-France General Assembly will be hosted by the French PTT research centre in Paris.
5. Low cost of telecommunications. This is also true for France.
6. DEC computer in Amsterdam on one hand (1 computer) and 2 additional computers (one IBM and one DEC) on the other hand (3 computers).
7. Amsterdam centre not located at an EARN node. Paris centre at EARN node.
8. Amsterdam centre is not an academic centre. It's location in industrial building. Paris centre located in a major French University.
9. Bad image in Amsterdam ("DEC network"). Good image in Paris (EARN independent from manufacturer).
10. EARN staff in Amsterdam paid by EARN. EARN France pays for one full time staff and the university will provide thesis students work.

In conclusion, both proposals have comparable merits for points 1, 2, 4 and 5, but the EARN France proposal has major advantages for points 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. We then propose to have only the OSI technical development center in Amsterdam, and to keep the EARN office in Paris.

Regards, Jean-Claude Ippolito