Institute

Jülich Supercomputing Centre (JSC)

Obituary: Dr. Walter Nadler (9. Juni 2015)

On 9 June 2015, Dr. Walter Nadler passed away at the age of 61. Even to those close to him this came as an unexpected shock.



Dr. Walter Nadler

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Dr. Walter Nadler was not only an established expert in simulating complex biological systems, he also excelled as a science manager, efficiently and effectively coordinating peer review procedures which had been established to grant Tier-1 and Tier-2 supercomputer resources to different user alliances. He was the driving force in implementing the GCS governance which was agreed upon by the GCS member centres in 2012/13, where he acted as indispensable advisor to the chairmen of numerous compute time granting commissions.

Walter received his PhD in Physics in 1985 at Technische Universität München, supervised by Prof. Klaus Schulten. In the following years he worked at different institutions, including the California Institute of Technology, Wuppertal University and Michigan Technological University. In October 1996 he joined Forschungszentrum Jülich for the first time and became for two years a member of the HLRZ (later NIC) research group Complex Systems, led by Prof. Peter Grassberger. He collaborated scientifically with many groups, among them the Complexity Science Group at Calgary University and the group Cardiac MRT and Biophysics at Würzburg University. Results of the latter collaboration were honoured 2003

with the Helmholtz prize. In 2007 he joined Forschungszentrum Jülich for a second time and became member of the NIC research group “Computational Biology and Biophysics”, headed by Prof. Ulrich Hansmann. Mid 2008 he was appointed head of the newly established NIC coordination office. Since then he focussed on introducing innovative enhancements to the NIC peer review and FZJ-internal allocation procedures. In 2012 an additional regional peer-review process for researchers from Forschungszentrum Jülich and RWTH Aachen University was approved (JARA-HPC partition), an extraordinarily complex undertaking which succeeded largely thanks to the skill and leadership demonstrated by Walter. One year later, the peer-review process for the newly established GCS Large-Scale Projects - defined by the GCS Governance - had to be integrated and implemented, again done by Walter. In the last few months he provided most valuable input to the redesign of JSC’s application and peer-review server software.

A role that Walter will also be fondly remembered for both inside and outside JSC is as an enthusiastic, unflappable and fearsomely efficient booth manager: in this capacity he organized and coordinated the exhibition of the Jülich Supercomputing Centre at the European International Supercomputing Conference (ISC) and the US Supercomputing Conference (SC) every year since 2008. Under his supervision these exhibitions became a cornerstone with respect to the international visibility of the Jülich Supercomputing Centre.

The Jülich Supercomputing Centre and its partner institutions in the Gauss Centre for Supercomputing, the John von Neumann Institute for Computing, the JARA-HPC Vergabegremium and the Vergabekommission für Supercomputer-Ressourcen at Forschungszentrum Jülich will all sorely miss him.

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